

THE
YOUNG WOMEN'S
CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
OF CANADA
AND ITS WORK



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THE WORK OF THE YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION IN CANADA.

By MISS UNA M. SAUNDERS,
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THE ASSOCIATION AND THE CHURCH.

The war, which first focussed our eyes on the men of the nation, soon led to a new appreciation of the possibilities of women's work, as well as to the opening of full citizenship to them. As, however, new responsibilities are placed on their shoulders (and these responsibilities will not be lessened by peace) the community needs to rise to a clear sense of what it owes to them in the shape of care for their protection, their housing, their recreation, their standard of earning. But their material welfare is not the only concern. Soon the mass of our men at the front will return, and at once a vital problem for the Church emerges; what help will these men give to the work of the Kingdom of God, what kind of homes will they build up or rebuild? The answer to this question cannot turn on the men alone, for it will largely depend on the spiritual and moral influence of their womenkind, those awaiting their return here, as well as those coming to these shores as wives of returning men.

It is, therefore, of grave importance that the Church and the community alike should accept responsibility for all that will help to procure for the young womanhood of Canada such means of character building and such helpful social environment as will strengthen their moral force.

For many years the Young Women's Christian Association has existed as a means through which such bodies as the churches and the community may together fulfil part of their functions as regards women, using it as a real "handmaid of the Church" (as it always aims to be) to carry on certain co-operative work, which it would cost too highly for each separate denomination to plan and execute. It also functions on behalf of the citizens in any given community by giving them the opportunity of placing a central building equipped perhaps with club-rooms, gymnasium, swimming pool, at the disposal of the women of that place. In no sense can it be said to take the place of the Church. Each Church has its own call to minister to the spiritual life of its women members, to lead their worship, to organize their efforts for home and foreign missions. In all of these the Y.W.C.A. itself

receives constantly the help of the Church, because its members are to a great extent Church members and through that source of grace and help the very spirit of the Association is kept alive. On the other hand the Y.W.C.A. can surely reciprocate by thus giving opportunity for the women of all churches, or those still outside any church life, to come together for certain practical purposes, and to effect great saving in effort and in money. Meanwhile the atmosphere in which the Association seeks to carry on its special service to women is the very same that is the essence of church life, i.e.—the love of our neighbour growing out of the love for God. However many may be the differences in organization of the branches of the Association, yet all must accept a basis which conforms with the Dominion Council's affirmation of faith in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and takes as its purpose, to seek to unite all young women to work for Christ's Kingdom among other girls and women.

For the Association is a world-wide body deeply founded on spiritual lines but not narrow in its definition of the word "spiritual," for its leaders believe that Christ's call to women is for a life of full development, physical, intellectual and social as well as religious. So all its many activities take into account the whole life of a girl, thus consecrating all that is natural to the higher purposes for which it is meant. Not only does it embrace the varied interests of a girl's life, but it is not limited to any one type of woman. The working girl has great claim on the Association's interest but so has also the college student, and the Young Women's Christian Association in Canada has from the beginning had Student branches of the Association as widespread as the City branches. Canada itself might seem to offer scope enough for this work for girls but for many years it has been a part of the Association's work to send Y.W.C.A. Secretaries to help such countries as India, China and Japan. With the advent of war came a call to help France also by sending Canadian workers there. It is, therefore, very really international in sympathy and service.

HISTORY AND SERVICE.

In the year 1855 in England began the work afterwards known as the Young Women's Christian Association. It was the outcome of the love for girls of a Miss Roberts of Barnet and her desire to unite with her all who would pray for them. The Prayer Union spread in a remarkable way, and in 1877 it was

made an integral part of another movement which had also organized in the fifties. This was the practical service rendered by Lady Kinnaird in opening a Home in London for nurses in training for the Crimean War. Soon this spread until there were many Homes and Institutes all founded on the same strongly evangelical basis as was Miss Robert's Prayer Union. It is interesting, therefore, to see how from the very beginning the Young Women's Christian Association has stood both for the contemplative and the active life. The power of the Association has lain in the great stream of prayer within it and its real faith in its motto, "Not by might nor by power but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." Loving sympathy with girls, however, has led to most energetic practical service and that service soon spread from England to other lands. Since 1873 Canada has had its own branch of this work and since 1895 it has been represented in the World's Young Women's Christian Association.

The direction of the work in Canada is entrusted to a Dominion Council composed of the President of each branch, City and Student, together with an Executive Committee made up of members resident in Toronto, where the national headquarters has now been for many years. Every three years a national convention should be held, but owing to the war it will be six years before it meets again in 1919.

The work of the Dominion Council requires a staff of about twenty-five National Secretaries and office workers. Its national organ is the "Association Outlook," published monthly.

The present leaders of the work are Lady Falconer (President), Mrs. N. W. Rowell and Mrs. L. A. Hamilton (Vice-Presidents), Miss M. L. Brock (Treasurer). Its national offices are at 332 Bloor St. West, Toronto.

Each local Association is autonomous and has its own elected Board, and its staff of Secretaries. In simpler form the College branches are the same.

The membership in Canada is about 20,000, with a great many other members of Clubs affiliated with it.

WORLD'S YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION.

It would be impossible to give a real insight into the value of this Association to Canadian life without giving a glimpse of its international character, for as Canada receives women from many countries and has constant intercourse with many more,

the channels of communication afforded by the World's Y.W.C.A. become very important.

There are some eighteen national Committees affiliated with the World's Committee which has its headquarters in London. Besides these, at the largest conference yet held, there were representatives from another eleven countries as yet unaffiliated, but carrying on similar work among girls. The membership is about 800,000.

At the last World's Conference held in Stockholm, two months before war broke out, some of the most interesting sessions were given to questions of emigration and immigration. Each country reported on the care taken in despatching emigrants to their new country, or on the type of immigrants needed and the preparation made for their reception. Plans were in process of being made which would use the World's Y.W.C.A. headquarters as a clearing house for such a co-operative work on behalf of those that emigrate, when the war broke out.

With the advent of peace at once our thoughts turn again to the future newcomer to Canada, and it seems therefore, natural to begin the survey of the various functions of the Association here by taking this as the starting point.

CANADIAN WORK.

IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT.—For some years there has been a National Secretary stationed at the ports with Government permission to meet all immigrants and to find out any women who would like help or who need introduction to some residence or worker in the place to which they are going. Lists of these are then forwarded to the Associations in cities where they exist, or to other suitable people. The sudden problem of bringing back at least thirty-five thousand soldiers' wives and dependents has called for an increased plan of care, for many of them are new to this country and arrive apart from their husbands. The scheme worked out now, therefore, is to station a Canadian Y.W.C.A. Secretary at each of the most important ports of embarkation in Great Britain, to place another Secretary on each ship carrying more than two hundred women to Canada, and then to have workers and a rest room or to co-operate with others having these, at each port of entry. Many are the cases of difficulty or sorrow which these workers are able to ease. This department would be incomplete were it not linked with the after-care in which many other bodies beside the Association are

working, but in which it has almost certainly the largest organized share. Letters to this National Immigration Secretary at Quebec, Halifax or St. John are welcomed from any needing help.

TRAVELLERS' AID DEPARTMENT.—Only those who have intimate knowledge of life in and around even quiet railroad stations well know how many are the dangers lurking round the path of the unwary. Turn to the quiet women wearing the Travellers' Aid badge which is universal in Canada (issued only from the Dominion Council Y.W.C.A.). They are employed by the Local Y.W.C.A. in many cities, by other bodies in a few places. Yearly they meet thousands of women and girls. A report of cases met by them in one year in pre-war days mounted to thirty-two thousand reported to Y.W.C.A. alone. A National Travellers' Aid Worker is now entering on her task of uniting and thus making more efficient, the safe-guarding of the girls who travel.

HOUSING.—The most insistent need is that of finding a roof to shelter the women who travel and those who come from other places to work in larger cities. In the thirty-seven City Associations there are residences varied in size, which can accommodate one thousand, five hundred and sixty-eight, but owing to the large number of transient guests in addition, they have often reported as many as twenty-seven thousand admitted in one year. Toronto with its five houses, has the largest capacity, four hundred and three. From every city, however, comes the pitiful cry even now that many more are turned away than can be taken in, though of course, those who fail to get in are constantly referred to boarding houses of which a list is kept.

Life in most of these houses is a very pleasant, friendly one; the restrictions are few and are seldom resented by those accustomed to a well-brought-up home life. Their men friends have the opportunity of visiting them as there are sitting rooms available. In almost every Residence there is a daily reminder of the presence of God in the "prayers" held immediately after supper; girls are not forced to attend but many do so voluntarily.

CAFETERIAS.—Another real benefit to the life of wage-earning women lies in the provision of down-town lunch-rooms or cafeterias, for thousands live far away from their work and many others can only obtain rooms without board. Every Association, therefore, throws open its dining room to girls living outside, and many provide much greater facilities in some other building specially adapted for such a purpose. A quiet rest room is usually attached to these cafeterias.

PHYSICAL CULTURE.—Health being one of the greatest necessities of a girl's life, the Association has laid great stress on the need of equipment in every city so that girls have the use of gymnasium and swimming pool and, if possible, of some place for summer out-door recreation. The number taking some form of Physical Culture has risen steadily, till eight thousand, nine hundred and twenty-five is the figure named for last year. The conscience of the community in many cities, however, still needs to be quickened, until generous givers will make possible such a place under the auspices of every Association. Occasionally the Y.M.C.A. have kindly opened their doors on certain days to their sister Association, but with the return of the soldiers this is likely to cease.

SOCIAL MORALITY.—The community is growing aware, as never before, of the problem created by the relationship of young men and women to each other and is considering how best to give positive teaching to both boys and girls on the sanctity of life. Spasmodic attempts have been made in many places, but for the lack of really qualified lecturers, many leaders have hesitated to introduce such teaching. The Association has planned a Department through which some of this need may be met. A woman doctor, assisted by a trained nurse and lecturer, has been placed in charge of this and they hope to have the help of qualified women in different parts of the country to arrange for short courses of talks on health and on Sex Hygiene. The desire of this department is to approach this whole matter from a spiritual and not a material, standpoint.

EDUCATION.—In thinking over the educational establishments of this country, few would number the Association among them, yet in some towns much of the after-school teaching which older girls take is acquired there. In some the regular subjects of elementary English education are given for girls who have had little chance before; in others, a business course is being pursued. Where no Technical School exists Domestic Science and kindred subjects find many pupils. In many cities the first impetus towards such Technical Schools came from the evident need for fuller training than our Association could give. Choral classes, Social Study groups and many other such helps towards a wider intellectual or aesthetic understanding are being given. As a nation, however, do we not still lack appreciation of the part that could be played in life by such education of the higher faculties? We deplore frivolity, but forget that unless the mind is given

plenty of fresh and interesting food on which to feed, it is inevitable that it will occupy itself with the less good. But a girl wearied with her day's work, will not set herself to definite study, unless very attractive courses are prepared, and probably unless it is woven in with other and lighter parts of the Association programme. For this reason sometimes lecture courses are part of the Club activities of some special group.

CLUBS.—The loneliness of a country girl who finds herself in a great city crowd is proverbial. Even if she joins a large Association she may lack for some time more intimate fellowship. Hence perhaps one of the reasons for the growth of the Club idea in the midst of the bigger membership. These groups are formed because of some congeniality of taste or occupation and many different ones may be affiliated to one City Association. All kinds of fantastic names betray or conceal their origin and purpose; some are overseas clubs, some are patriotic in character, others are formed from the cash girls in some large store or a group who made friends at a summer outing. Most of them accomplish more than the one purpose of good fellowship, for the programme of their weekly meetings is almost sure to cover many useful things. As they are very often self-governing clubs with officers elected from among themselves, they are also a splendid place of training for future leadership and many of us have sat by in amazement at the business-like conduct of their meetings.

INDUSTRIAL WORK.—Closely allied with these Clubs is the work carried on in factories where numbers of women are employed. On the staff of some of the larger Associations is an Industrial Secretary whose task it is to get into touch with employers of labour and, where possible, obtain leave to visit weekly their place of business during the noon hour. A varied programme, travel talks, music, etc., is needed to make such meetings welcome, but as a rule the response from the employees is warm, and it usually leads to the formation of a special self-governing Club, which may also elect to meet for an evening session of fun or education in the Association building. Even though at first the religious side of the Association purpose cannot always be emphasized (especially in factories with Roman Catholic and Jewish girls among the employees), yet if the workers are themselves women imbued with the spirit of Christ, insensibly it must tell. As a rule the girls themselves finally elect to weave the spiritual element into their very practical Club.

So far the National staff of the Association has not had on it a specialist on industrial life and economic problems, but such an appointment is contemplated in the near future. In the United States through the excellent work done by such a National Industrial Secretary, the Association has been stirred to think and to act in matters concerning women in industry, the latest development having been that the American Y.W.C.A. has definitely taken its stand side by side with the Women's Trade Union League and other bodies in demanding minimum wage laws, a shorter working day and several other reforms urgently needed for the great mass of women workers.

HOLIDAY CAMPS.—For girls with limited means, the question of a Summer Holiday is a very difficult one and many of them have been gladdened when they found the City Association to which they belonged, had a summer camp or cottage to which they could go. Calgary has one at Banff, Vancouver one at Whytecliff Beach, Montreal one in the Laurentians, to mention only a few renowned for especial beauty. Some City Associations also have a camp during the summer within car-fare distance, so that girls who cannot afford a real holiday may yet go and live out there and come in daily to their work. The Dominion Council has also managed for three years, a Provincial Holiday Camp near Lake Couchiching, Ontario, largely for industrial workers. These camps are found to be such a source of benefit, to body, mind and soul, that the Council is desirous of seeing a considerable increase of them throughout the country, and it is hoped that public-minded citizens may help to make them possible by giving land on which a camp centre could be erected.

RECREATION.—While a camp provides one of the best summer recreations for a privileged few, the whole vital question remains of the leisure hours of girls in cities and the many difficulties and temptations surrounding them. Commercial bodies direct their best efforts to make recreation attractive, and while some few are high principled, the greater number pay no real attention to the moral aspect of the question and too many actually pander to the lower instincts and stimulate the very passions we would fain see kept under strict control.

As an Association, the provision of recreation has not yet gone far. The clubs and classes, the athletic meets, the physical culture departments are all, of course, the best of counter-attractions to the lower forms of amusement, but they reach far too few. The accommodation and equipment of most of the Associa-

tion buildings is utterly inadequate to provide for all the wholesome fun that should be within the reach of girls living away from their own homes. It will undoubtedly require in many cities the co-operation of the churches before such provision can be made. There are Church buildings still unused certain nights of the week, as well as school buildings. Why should not an effort be made to organize recreation on a much larger scale under a regularly equipped director, perhaps attached to the Y.W.C.A. staff and free to co-operate with any bodies that can provide a place suitable for social gatherings?

It will not alone be the recreation of girls that calls for this united effort. One of the pathetic sights is to see men and girls obliged to use the streets or "movies" for opportunities for perfectly legitimate friendship. The few girls boarding in the Association Home can, of course, bring their men friends there to sit and talk, but what is really needed is something of a centre or club, perhaps under the united guardianship of the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. and backed by the churches they represent. There men and women could enjoy real fun together, could at times play and dance, could sit down to a light meal together and feel the joy of something approaching a home atmosphere. A beginning of this kind has been made by the Y.W.C.A. in Halifax in two efforts, one being a Patriotic Service Battalion of women recruited from many churches and uniting to provide good recreation for the many soldiers and sailors in the city; the other, a girls' club where every night girls may bring in their men friends. One sailor, in expressing his appreciation of this place, described how till then he had to go to a dance hall, "a hell of a place." The question of dances under proper supervision is being discussed in many places and various small experiments have been made.

TEEN AGE GIRLS' WORK.—Under this title we class a widespread and comparatively new part of our work, much of which is done in co-operation with the Sunday School leaders. The great success attending a similar work of co-operation for boys, called the "Canadian Standard Efficiency Test," led to the formation of a National Advisory Committee on co-operation in girls work some three years ago. On this Committee sit representatives of the Sunday School Boards of the Anglican, Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian bodies, the Sunday School Association and the Young Women's Christian Association. Unitedly, they have drawn up and are propagating throughout the country

an outline programme for girls work called "Canadian Girls in Training." The idea at the heart of this lies in the thought of a symmetrical four-fold development of every girl's life and is based on the words, "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man." The task of making this symmetrical development tangible to girls is a difficult one. A "Girls Standard" has therefore, been worked out, showing in tabular form some of the ideals (physical, social, intellectual, religious) to which each girl's life should approximate in some degree. Such a "standard" explained practically and sympathetically by a leader at a conference or in club or class, may be the very spur needed to quicken some girl to make use of the opportunities around her and develop those qualities in which she sees herself to be lacking. Under the physical standard come such matters as health education, physical culture, sports, etc.; under the intellectual, school, home-reading, public speaking, educational trips, hobbies, etc.; under the religious; daily prayer, and Bible reading, public worship, personal dedication, systematic giving, mission study, etc.; under the social (or service) standard; personal relationships in home and church and community, training for leadership, choosing a vocation.

Plans for helping towards this development are also outlined and great stress is laid on Sunday School classes, and the mid-week meeting which should be associated with the class. Programmes worked out in much detail are included in the pamphlet which is used unitedly by all the co-operating bodies and can be obtained from the headquarters of each denomination and the Y.W.C.A.

Growing out of this work has been the succession of Conferences for Teen Age girls and leaders, held throughout the Dominion, under the united auspices, with speakers from each group. The National Y.W.C.A. has thrown itself whole-heartedly into this work and is giving the services of three or four national workers to cover the Dominion and work in co-operation with the churches. In some cities the mid-week meetings of the Sunday School group are held in the Y.W.C.A. building, because it provides equipment for physical culture and can also accommodate the separate groups in different rooms for that part of the evening's programme which belongs to the small class alone with its own teacher. This same scheme of "Canadian Girls in Training" is of course, used by many Y.W.C.A. groups and clubs. In this co-operative work, however, much attention is being given to encouraging girls to remain in or to join Sunday School classes.

The training of leaders for this work is perhaps the most critical question; it is of little avail to arouse the enthusiasm of three hundred girls at some great conference and then to have their desires frustrated by the inability or unwillingness of their teacher to take up this new development of her Sunday School work. For this reason, in many places short courses of lectures on the four-fold standard are being given in the Y.W.C.A. buildings to teachers and girl leaders from all the different denominations.

CONFERENCES.—The conferences in which the Y.W.C.A. take part are not, however, confined to those mentioned above under girls' work. For the last ten years one of the outstanding features of the Association has been the enthusiasm created by and the profound good resulting from the annual Summer Conference held until this year at Elgin House on one of the Muskoka Lakes. There City and College delegates alike met, gathered from a wide stretch of territory (often including Dalhousie University, Halifax, and Winnipeg) for a week of study and fun, well mixed together. Lately the demand for the conferences has increased, so that now four student ones are held each summer in Ontario, Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Nova Scotia. A city one is held in Ontario and plans are being made for more of these. Ten days together of daily Bible, Mission Study, of discussion on life problems, whether in college or in business and of addresses on vital subjects lead to friendships based on the deeper interests of the inner life and yet more they lead to the greatest friendship of all, that with our Lord and Master. The conferences also help girls to see that this life of personal religion is nothing dull or sad, for woven in with the study and the prayer and the discussion comes the natural and delightful fun that springs up where a group of young girls have the joys of boating and bathing and games and marvellous "stunt" afternoons.

School girls have their share in this too, for not only is there a special national camp held for them in Ontario, but the Associations in Montreal and one or two other cities have most successful camps for them. Out of these there have grown up in several High Schools and private schools special branches of the Y. W. C. A. These are excellent training ground for such girls as go on to the University and for the Department next to be described.

STUDENT DEPARTMENT.—This is one of the two principal divisions of the whole Association work in Canada, the City and the Student Departments, and it numbers each year as a rule

about 2,700 in its membership. As college women are a perpetually fluctuating body, perhaps a third of that number leaves each year and fresh recruits must take their places, but at least this insures the Association against stagnation. In short-term colleges, however, (such as Agricultural and Normal courses) it is extremely difficult to maintain any continuity at all, and much turns on having some permanent members of the faculty or graduates who will bring the Association ideals before the incoming students each autumn. The genius, however, of this college work, as seen in the universities, lies in its being really a work of students among students, with only the occasional visit of a Student Travelling Secretary, or the help of some senior friend asked to lead a study group or address a meeting. The "Cabinet" of the Y.W.C.A. is made up of students in charge of the different departments, Bible, Mission, and Social study, the prayer life, the general meetings, the social service and so on—under the guidance of a Student President. In the larger universities it is very usual for the "Cabinet" and some other leading students to go away together for a week-end just before the autumn term begins, to hold a "pre-sessional Conference" and make plans for the year's work and by united prayer and discussion quicken the inner soul of their Association. During the last two years a new impetus has been given to the thought of "giving" and wonderful has been the response from many Universities both in funds for Prisoners of War, and also for Foreign Mission Work. It takes the full time of two National Student Travelling Secretaries to cover the field each year besides a special Secretary for Toronto University. Interwoven with this work in the colleges, but not under the direct management of the Student Y.M.C.A. or Y.W.C.A. is the work of recruiting for foreign mission candidates undertaken by the Student Volunteer Movement, with its headquarters in New York.

As many colleges are co-educational the work among men and women students needs to be closely allied, and often to be carried out for some special purpose in some combined effort. This led some years ago to the formation of the Canadian Student Council in which the Student Committees of the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A., as well as the Student Volunteer Movement, are all represented. Unitedly they now publish a magazine called the "Canadian Student" and also bring out an Intercession leaflet three times a year.

For the sake of maintaining close relationship with the stu-

dent work of the United States, Canada is also represented in the North American Student Council, of which Dr. John R. Mott is Chairman. Under this body is a special Voluntary Study Committee which is responsible for finding writers for and issuing study books on both Biblical and Missionary lines for use in the colleges.

Finally the Canadian student work is not only federated with the American work, but with the World's Student Christian Federation with its 185,000 members scattered throughout the world. At the great international conferences, held as a rule every second year, a marvellous stimulus is given to the work of the Kingdom as each country and type brings its contribution and faith is quickened.

We cannot leave the Student Department of the Y.W.C.A. without commenting on the fact that its importance is out of all proportion to its numerical strength, for it is reaching the coming women leaders and is helping to call them into obedience to Christ and into His service. The purpose placed before each student as she signs the membership card is as follows:—

To call the women students to the knowledge of God in Christ Jesus and to His discipleship in every department of conduct.

To promote among them regular habits of Bible Study and of prayer.

To lead them into the fellowship and service of the Christian Church.

To keep before them the importance and urgency of world-wide evangelization, the Christian solution of social problems and the permeation of public life with Christian ideals.

in joining each student proclaims,—

“I wish to declare my loyalty to Jesus Christ and to express my sympathy with the purpose of this Association by uniting with others in its work in this college.”

Though it is impossible by statistics to show how many of these students owe their impetus towards the service of Christ to the work of the Association, yet personal talks make evident how valuable is its influence. The Student Secretaries always emphasize the opportunity within the Christian Church both at home and abroad for those who are graduating and thus try to ensure that the Association and the Church maintain their happy mutual relations.

FOREIGN DEPARTMENT.—The Women's Movement that has revolutionized life in this century for us has also been stirring the air in lands where women's position is still absolutely subordinate. As it moves in India, China, and Japan, the women who rise up into new life and liberty call to us of Western lands for help and leadership. The women of the churches have responded through their Foreign Mission Boards. Now the call comes to us in the Association as those trained in a special type of women's work, much needed in centres of education or industry in Eastern lands. Our Association, therefore, has built up the beginning of a Foreign Department, and through the gifts of its members it now maintains five Canadian Y. W. C. A. Secretaries abroad. Three are stationed in India; a college graduate who is head of the Y.W.C.A. work in Calcutta, another graduate in Colombo, Ceylon, and a physical culture director in Bombay. One is stationed at Hong Kong, opening a new and important branch there for which Chinese women have been eagerly pleading. Another Secretary is in Japan, head of the work in Tokyo. It is planned soon to send out three more workers, so urgent is the call.

The task of raising the budget of \$8,000.00 needed for the salaries, outfit, travelling, and house expenses of these workers abroad is left with the Foreign Department and its Secretary, and it does not come under the general finance arrangements. There has been a splendid growth of response from many individual members, city and student. It has shown the truth of the fact that it is often those less endowed with this world's wealth who give most generously to foreign mission work. Very real self-sacrifice has made possible the advance of this part of the Association's work.

NATIONAL SERVICE.

(a) WORK IN FRANCE.—Since the war began a new department has been opened under the general title of National Service. One of the first claims on money contributed to the Dominion Council for such National Service was to meet the need for helpers with some of the Y.W.C.A. work in France. Two Secretaries have been working there; one attached especially to the work being done by the American Y.W.C.A.; the other lent to the British Y.W.C.A. to take charge of a recreation hut (built with Canadian money) for the W.A.A.C.'s ("Women's Army Auxiliary Corps") at Honfleur, near Havre. The French Government as well as the French Y.W.C.A. have been most appreciative of this united help from the Allied countries.

(b) **HOSTESS HOUSES.**—Another of the National Service efforts has been the very popular one of planning "Hostess Houses" close to or within some of the military training camps in Canada, so that men in khaki might be able to meet their women relations and friends in comfort and under right auspices. Eight had been or were in running order before the Armistice changed the face of affairs: Camp Borden, Petawawa, London, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Beamsville, Long Branch, Leaside, Toronto University. The rush of visitors, men and women, to some of them taxed the powers of the hostesses, but the expressions of thanks from relations, officers and men amply repaid the hard labour often involved.

(c) **WOMEN ON THE LAND.**—Two years ago the Ontario Government set itself to meet the great need for conservation of the crops by placing hundreds of women on the land during the fruit season, especially in the Niagara district. The Trades and Labour Bureau turned to the Dominion Council to ask for its co-operation in supervising the housing of these workers and it was gladly accorded. For two seasons now the Y.W.C.A. camps have been well known features in Ontario. At the close of this season there had been thirty-eight camps opened, some running from May till October, and through them 1,200 girls had this year been housed. The constant supervision of those camps alone, with the National Service motor had meant driving 8,000 miles. Financially, the work cannot carry itself with the low cost of board which the workers are able to pay, but that the expenditure of money and time is well worth while, none can doubt.

British Columbia this year also turned to the Y.W.C.A. for help. The work entrusted to us was in some ways more extensive, for as there are no Government Labour Exchanges there, the whole task of recruiting labour, making contracts with the farmers, locating the workers, and supervising their housing, lay with us. After a very successful season we look back with satisfaction at the able work of the National Secretary in charge who had been instrumental in placing 1,980 women on the land.

In both Provinces, the experience gained by these girls both on farms and in canning factories, is very varied; it is opening the eyes of some to the economic and other questions involved, and many a University Student goes back to her academic work with a knowledge no longer theoretical but intensely practical of the reason for trade unions, and the necessity for certain types of

legislation. She also often gains a new and sympathetic understanding of the difficulties of farmers and an appreciation of the place of agriculture in Canadian development.

Until the last three years the Dominion Council was seriously crippled in its functions by the paltry financial support it was receiving. The affiliation fees contributed from its local branches were very small and it had till then never conducted a campaign for money, but had relied on quiet work in soliciting subscriptions. With the new responsibilities placed upon its work during war time, a change of policy was essential, and it is with great thankfulness that the Executive look back upon the response given throughout the country when an appeal was made at the same time as that for the National Y.M.C.A. and through their instrumentality. The whole of the National Service department has been made possible and much of the other and more usual part of the work has been greatly increased, owing to the money entrusted to us by the men and women interested in matters concerning the welfare of young men and women.

With the coming of peace it seems probable that our work will be increased rather than curtailed; agriculture will apparently still need us for a time, immigration will bring newcomers to our shores, fluctuations in employment will throw new tasks on the City Associations. It also seems evident that the loosening of some of the old conventions of morality will call for added effort on the part of all who are interwoven with the lives of the younger girls, and may very possibly challenge us to new departures in supervising opportunities of social life for men and women together. In throwing ourselves into the infinitely varied life and the human interests of all types of women, we hope that our spiritual message may not be lost, but may gain new opportunities to sound out its clear message of hope and love through the Incarnate Saviour.

