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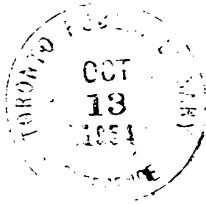
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THE CHURCH SISTERHOOD, TORONTO.

The Committee charged with the furtherance of the Church Sisterhood, desire to bring before the Members of the Church at large, a brief record of its history for the past—its prospects for the future—and would gladly enlist their sympathies and assistance on behalf of the much-needed work to which this benevolent community devotes itself.

I. The Committee wish that it should be distinctly understood that the Sisterhood is not a Parochial Institution, and (as the record hereunto attached, plainly shows,) extends such good offices as its Members can fulfil to all who stand in need of help, irrespective of creed, sex, circumstances, or locality. There is a not unnatural tendency to call the community "The Holy Trinity Sisterhood," in consequence of its having its home in that Parish, and the Rector-Assistant thereof being for the present its Warden and Chaplain. But the hope is entertained that in course of time it may grow in strength, numbers, and usefulness, until in future years it may extend its labors of benevolence far and wide, not through this Province only, but throughout the whole Dominion. It would manifestly be better to have one great Sisterhood for the Church in Canada, than to found a number of small and feeble communities. A name therefore which would in some measure indicate this widely extended and non-parochial character would be desirable. Now, certain names have a national significance: as St. George for England, St. Patrick for Ireland, St. Andrew for Scotland, St. Denis for France. Canada was discovered on the Festival of

St. John the Baptist, and hence his name has in a measure become similarly associated, not with any special locality, but with the country at large. Hence it has been suggested that the community should be known as "THE SISTERHOOD OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST."

II. This Sisterhood having special duties to perform, must have a special uniform by which both its Members and others may be kept mindful of their character and work. Experience has shown that a grave distinctive dress is an absolute necessity, in order to secure for the inmates of the House that protection and respect which is needful in the discharge of their work. While this dress is sufficiently distinctive to secure these ends, it is not such as is likely to give offence or unnecessarily to excite prejudice.

III. Although commenced by a lady from England, to whom we shall always owe a debt of deep gratitude, the community has now become and is intended to remain a purely Canadian Institution. The difference in ecclesiastical atmosphere, social customs, and conventional habits which has in course of time grown up between this and the mother country, is now too strongly marked to render the employment of English Sisters desirable for anything beyond the mere initiation of the work, even supposing their services could be obtained.

IV. The need of such works of mercy as the Members of this community discharge, is very urgent, and the calls made upon them have been too numerous for them to respond to fully. The brief notice of their work (hereunto appended) for nine months of the past year, during a considerable part of which there were but two ladies in the Home, will show how much may be done by systematic and devoted work.

V. A Canadian lady, the daughter of a Clergyman, well

known in this country, has consented to take charge of the Home and the work connected with it, aided by a valuable and earnest worker, who has been with us for nearly a year. There are other ladies who have become "Associates" of the House, and who, though living in their own homes, give a certain portion of their time to such works of the community as they are competent or disposed to undertake.

VI. The rules are of a simple character, always open to modification by a vote of the community, *and involving no obligation of a permanent character*; though of course, should ladies wish to sever their connection with the House, they would be expected to give such reasonable notice as would prevent inconvenience, or confusion in the work.

VII. As regards the future, it is proposed to carry on works similar to those referred to in the record hereunto attached, as far as the strength, number, and means of the community will permit. If those numbers and means could be increased, a Ward for cases requiring special Medical and Surgical treatment would at once be opened; for this there is very urgent need. A case recently occurred where a valuable life was lost, after a successful surgical operation, simply from the want of efficient conscientious nursing. It is also hoped that ere long "a Refuge for Destitute Women," affording shelter till their circumstances could be properly investigated, will be added to the Institution.

VIII. Through the liberality of a gentleman of this city, land has been given whereon a permanent Home for the Sisterhood (together with such other buildings as might be requisite for the carrying on of their various works of charity,) can be erected whenever God by His Good Spirit moves the hearts of His people to add to the small building fund which now exists, sufficiently to warrant the undertaking.

The Committee therefore would earnestly appeal to their fellow Members in the Church throughout the country, for aid in support of this good work, either by contributions towards its present maintenance or the erection of its permanent Home. Ladies who have any idea of devoting themselves to such a life, would, with proper introductions be gladly received as probationary visitors for a month or so. They would thus see the working of the House, and all parties could judge more correctly regarding the feasibility of entering the community for a longer period, which, of course, must be done by mutual consent. Others who may be precluded from such a measure of personal service, but who are nevertheless anxious to assist those who are in distress, might become "Associates" of the House, and under the direction of the Sister-Superior give such time as they can properly spare from other duties to good works among the poor and suffering; thus giving to their benevolent efforts a unity and system which they would otherwise lack. Others again might assist most materially in alleviating misery in its multitudinous forms by placing in the hands of those who devote their lives to its investigation and relief, some measure of those pecuniary means which from want of knowledge are so often misapplied, and therefore worse than wasted.

It may be well to add, that the obligations assumed by "Associates" of the House, are in the main, as follows:

- 1st. To use at their daily devotions, and when possible at the Holy Communion (of which they are supposed to be regular partakers), a short prayer for the community and its work.

- 2nd. To assist in carrying out that work in any neighborhood where they may happen to reside, by devoting to it such hours in the week, as can be properly spared from other duties. If in Toronto, to do their work in connexion with

the House, and under the direction of the Sister-Superior ; if not resident there, to avail themselves of such suggestions as she may offer, concerning its details, as may be found applicable to the circumstances and situation. (*Note—Associates of the House are not required to visit cases of contagious disease ; nor to sit up at night, unless the latter is done as an act of voluntary kindness.*)

3rd. To endeavour by all lawful means, to interest others in the work, to make known its existence as widely as they can, and to obtain from the members of the Church, whenever possible, their prayers, their personal assistance, and their pecuniary offerings.

4th. Although no obligation of the kind can be laid upon Associates, yet it is much to be desired, that when possible for themselves, and when convenient for the House, they should pay a short visit for some such period as Advent or Lent—Conforming to visitors' rules, and taking part in the regular daily devotions and work.—*See last page.*

5th. Any lady becoming an "Associate" of the House, and afterwards removing to another country, and thus prevented by distance or other circumstances, from working for this House, shall be at liberty to carry on her work in connection with any religious house in her neighborhood, where it may be convenient or advisable for her to do so.

NOTE.

Memorandum of work done by the Church Sisterhood, Toronto, during the past nine months, condensed from the House Record.

I. Upwards of twenty special cases of extreme sickness, contagious and otherwise, attended till recovery or death, involving a large amount of toil, danger, and watching—reaching in one case nineteen nights. (Details entered and may be referred to in the House Record.)

In order that people may form some idea of these cases, the details of a few of them are subjoined.

1. Mrs. ———, a poor deserted friendless woman, utterly worn out with nursing a sick child, dying of consumption. One of the Community sat up with the child, in order to give the mother rest, and nursed it until its death, attended to the laying-out of the body, and accompanied the mother to the grave; securing her most grateful thanks for sympathy and aid given at such a time. During the illness of the child, food and medicine were provided from the House.

2. ————A severe and protracted case of Typhoid Fever. Owing to the fear of contagion, there was great difficulty in obtaining help in nursing. One of the Community took charge of the case, and nursed the patient until death, obtaining the approval of the medical attendant, and the warm acknowledgements of the family of the sufferer, who belonged to the higher class of society.

3. Mrs. ———, a chronic case of a hopelessly incurable character. Constantly visited for months, cared for and made as comfortable as circumstances would permit. It would be difficult to convey any idea of the misery which unavoidably marked this household. The husband before going to his labor, had to provide his own food, and that for his helpless wife and young children; after which the house was left unavoidably to take care of itself, the mother being unable to lift her hand. Dinner was sent from the House, almost daily for months, and much done by all the ladies to alleviate the wants of the poor patient. The husband's work having rendered necessary their removal to a distant part of the town, it is no longer possible to aid them as in the past, and one of the Clergy having since called upon the sufferer, she expressed her deep sense of the great loss she has sustained in no longer having the comfort of "the dear Sisters," on whose heads she invokes every blessing.

4. Mrs. ———, a poor worthy woman, trembling on the verge of death, and placed in circumstances of most bitter trial, mental as well as bodily, was nursed by two members of the Community, who sat up, night after night, in a most miserable place, during the most severe weather, of one of the severest winters we have had for years. Food, medicine and comforts were supplied from the House. She recovered, beyond expectation, and it is not saying too much, to affirm that under God, it was in no small measure due to the care and kindness of the Sisters; one of whom suffered severely in consequence of the labor and exposure involved.

5. In a miserable yard, in the rear of ————street, a bad case of complicated disease was found; the man old and feeble, the place wretched and filthy to an extreme; the wife of doubtful steadiness, and wholly unable to care for the patient. One of the ladies, resident in the House, took charge; did something to make the room decent, sat up with him at night, took him his meals and other comforts, and finally by great exertions, got him into the Hospital, to the saving of his life.

6. ——— A young man without friends or relatives in this country and evidently belonging to the higher classes, met with a severe accident when engaged in unaccustomed work. Amputation of a limb became necessary. Mortification set in. Lockjaw supervened, and death followed after much suffering. One of the inmates of the House spent the ten days of his illness in constant attendance upon him, sitting up at night and doing all that Christian sympathy and attention could do to alleviate his sufferings, to promote his comfort and to lessen the feeling of utter loneliness which oppressed him, as a stranger dying among strangers. The case was one of considerable interest, and the attention he received has been acknowledged with the deepest gratitude by his sorrowing friends in England.

7. Mrs. ———, the wife of a laboring man. This was one of the most trying cases which has come under the care of the community. The sufferer's malady was well nigh hopeless, and required a good deal of nerve to manage. One of the community, who has done much good work in this way, undertook the case, and sat up altogether nineteen nights while in attendance upon her. Though in a very distant part of the town, the Sister continued her care of the patient until her death, when she was compelled to seek a few days of well earned and much needed rest.

8. Mrs. ———, a bad case of typhoid fever. During a week of very severe illness, one of the community sat up with her, getting some one to take her place while she got some needful rest. She was with the patient when she died. The fear of infection was so great that no one—not even her own relatives would touch the body. The Sister in charge of the case had to arrange matters as decently as she could, but from causes unnecessary to mention, she was physically unable to do all that she desired.

II. Night Schools, 4 nights in a week.

Boys, 2 nights—Nos.	46
Girls, 2 nights—Nos.	24

Total, 70

III. Dorcas Society—The ladies of the congregation met at the Home and in addition to their work the inmates collected much cast off clothing, and were enabled to aid in this way about one hundred persons.

IV. Between two and three hundred dinners have been prepared and sent out from the Home to persons in sickness and distress.

V. A large number of tickets for bread and meat have been given to persons in want, to whom other assistance could not be—in many cases—safely given.

VI. A large amount of medicine and medical comforts have been given, in cases of transient sickness.

VII. A sewing-class for young girls has met for some time once a week, and is fairly attended.

VIII. An attempt has been made to organize a "Mother's Meeting," but the idea is not yet familiar to our people, and it will require another season to secure any great measure of success.

IX. Regular district visiting, collecting for the clothing and fuel club, and generally, trying to influence the people for good.

Among the poor, prejudice has died out, and its place is taken by respect and gratitude. It is to be hoped that those to whom God has given more ample means, will come to our aid in this good work.

VISITORS' RULES

will be forwarded on application. Additional copies of this Pamphlet can be furnished to those who will kindly circulate them.

CONTRIBUTIONS IN MONEY,

either for the support of the House, the Building Fund, or the Poor Fund, may be sent to the Sister Superior, 38 Gerrard Street West, Toronto; or the Rev. W. Stewart Darling, Holy Trinity Parsonage.

CONTRIBUTIONS IN KIND:

Cast-off clothing, old linen for wounds, or fancy articles to be sold for the good of the work, will be gratefully received at the Home, and will be acknowledged by the Sister Superior.

It is suggested that those Congregations who are not much burthened with poor, might perhaps consent to make a small weekly allowance from their offertory to the Poor Fund of the House, for the benefit of the sick and suffering. Any sum, from twenty-five cents upwards, would be gladly received and carefully expended by the ladies of the Home.

"He that giveth to the Poor lendeth to the Lord."

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