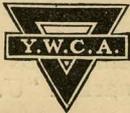


WAR WORK BULLETIN

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March 7, 1919

HOUSEKEEPING ON A BUSINESS BASIS



Photo by Underwood and Underwood.

Lady Londonderry

But the old-fashioned English domestic servant who could be depended upon for everything at all hours is passing. Once a girl has worked in munition plants with regular hours, factory-life freedom and high wages, she is not willing to return to housework in British homes run on antiquated schedules. England, therefore, has a servant problem even more acute than the United States, for English homes are more dependent on servants than those in America.

Mary McDowell Reports English Plan

Miss Mary McDowell, who recently returned from England and France where she has been making investigations for the Young Women's Christian Association, tells of an interesting experiment that is being carried on by Lady Londonderry, who organized the Women's Legion during the war. The Legionaries did everything from driving motor ambulances and supply trucks to military and hospital cooking. And now Lady Londonderry has undertaken to organize a Legion of Domestic Workers.

Members of this household section of the Legion will wear the uniform of the order and an official badge. Each will be qualified and trained for a certain position and sent out as a specialist who will work by the day—an eight-hour day—or the hour.

There will be a probation period of three months and then work at a minimum salary. As the efficiency increases and the worker becomes expert in her profession her salary will

TIME was when Americans, harassed by the servant problem, came to England to live. Here they could keep house in peace and sing the virtues of English domestics, making comparisons based on experience in the United States with servants of every race and color. They declared that from cook-general to nurse and between-maid, the English serving women had no peers—they worked harder, better, longer hours, and with more willingness and for less pay than servants in any other part of the world.

be increased. For each year of service she will receive a service stripe.

The Legionaries will live in hostels and may pay for their own lunches. Accordingly they will be quite as independent while working in a kitchen of a private home as though working in a factory.

An interesting investigation of some of the reasons why English servants do not want to return to their old positions reveals, among others, the following:

They object to being called by their last name.

They object to wearing caps and aprons.

They object to food they must eat in most private homes.

They object to sleeping below the level of the sidewalk.

The British Y. W. C. A. has also instituted a similar experiment in London. A central hostel has been erected, as a sort of club house, and the maids are distinguished by wearing the Blue Triangle.

Figures from the United States Employment Bureau of New York City have shown that the domestic service problem in the United States is a very grave one. Balance it with its early and late work, its social stigma, its low wages, with industrial work, regular hours, time off and higher social standing, and the reason for this is obvious.

The Y. W. C. A. Makes Investigations

A valuable piece of investigation, made several years ago by Miss Henrietta Roelofs, then secretary of the Young Women's Christian Association commission on household employment, entitled "The Trained Road to Service," was based on a sound study of the working girl's point of view. It concluded that the reason for our dissatisfied and fluctuating domestics was the fault of the employer.

The Young Women's Christian Association has been interested in the problem of domestic service both from the standpoint of the employee and the employer for some years. The first commission on household employment made its report at its fifth national convention, held in Los Angeles, California, in May, 1915.

(Continued on page 4)



Miss Mary McDowell

Y. W. C. A. In A Nunnery

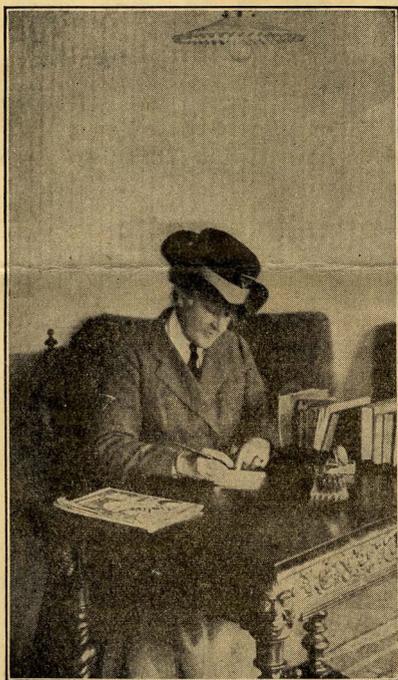
BREST has overgrown itself to such an extent since the Americans came to France and used this city as one of their doorways, that hotel accommodations are a joke here. There just is no such thing.

And the tide, turned now toward America, is making the city even more congested. Women in increasing numbers are being sent from their war tasks back to their homes in America, through the port of Brest. The soldiers, of course, are going to be shipped by the thousands through this city. For them there are great camps adjoining the city where they can be billeted awaiting sailing.

But there was no place for the women. And so the Y. W. C. A. decided to open a Hostess House here. It was not an easy place to find a building for this purpose. Every corner and cranny of Brest seemed to be doing double duty in the way of housing inhabitants. But an old convent was found up on the heights next to the city ramparts and overlooking the harbor. The sisters were persuaded to move over into one wing and rent the other half of their house.

Now there is a big blue and white sign "American Y. W. C. A. Hostess House" over the doorway, covering up the carved inscription "1726," the date of the building's erection.

The dining room was once a cloister. Under the arching pillars, little tables are spread now with the gay colored dishes of Brittany. Three times a day a group of women gathers here, these also consecrated to service, even as were the quiet nuns who have paced this floor for centuries. The



Mrs. Francis McNeil Bacon,
who called together the Provisional Council



Miss Harriet Taylor,
Director of the American Y. W. C. A. in France

dark blinds that hung here for years have been taken down. When the infrequent sun dares to shine through the rain drops, it comes in through windows strangely gay with yellow cretonne hangings. Gothic windows they are, and churchly shaped, but they have yellow curtains nevertheless.

Through the "dining room" windows can be seen the tiny chapel—a chapel in miniature it really is. Across the little stone courtyard that is hedged from the curious by moss covered walls, the nuns move at each bell tolling to their worship. The rooms occupied by the Americans are still

connected with the "prayer clock" and at each worship hour, the call to meditation sounds through the halls filled now with busy-walking Americans and luggage marked "U. S. A."

THERE is a high stone wall in front of the building which is the home of ten American girls stationed at Brest for the "Hello" service of their country's army. The open work iron gate swings heavily on hinges, that many rains of France have rusted. The house sits regally back from the boulevard behind a formal garden of stiff cut shrubs and bushes. There is no sign on it inside or out. For this is not an institu-

tion. It is a home. Like the United States Army, the Signal Corps girls come from every occupation and profession. They are scattered throughout France in little groups of ten or a dozen, wherever the "peace armies" of America are stationed. Where there is a signal corps unit there is a Y. W. C. A. representative, who maintains the home for these girls. This is the government's arrangement for the housing of this branch of the army.

The Provisional Council

By Keith Clark, Director of Publicity for France

TO concentrate the woman power of the world and make it a factor in the world—that may seem too large to be practical, too vague to be true. And yet, such concentration occurred during the last days of January at No. 8, Place Edouard VII, Paris.

It was made possible through the contribution of millions of American women, and through the co-operation of women from a half dozen countries of the world, met to consider the needs of the women of France and of the world.

The Young Women's Christian Association has its offices in Place Edouard VII. The women of America, who contributed to the United War Work Campaign Fund, recognized the Y. W. C. A. as the medium through which their contribution of millions for the relief of war-working and war-wearied women of the world should be spent. The women of France, of Great Britain, of Belgium, of Italy, of Roumania and of Serbia, sent representatives to consider how plans could be devised whereby this fund could be directed to the healing and the upbuilding of the women of the world.

The Place Edouard VII is one of the most picturesque

places in the world. It lies in the heart of Paris. It is so new that many true Parisians do not know it; off the Grand Boulevards, a little to one side of the Opera, a quiet eddy in the heart of gaiety and of affairs.

The week of the last of January began with a reception to the wife of the President of the United States, where five hundred American women war workers and a few score of French women, with here and there women of other nationalities out of this cosmopolitan Paris, called to pay their homage.

The two middle days of the week, Wednesday and Thursday, were occupied with the first sessions of the Provisional Council, the temporary organization which has been effected through the Y. W. C. A., uniting five large national French women's societies, to study the problems of French women, to acquaint them with each other and the work of each other, and to begin the creation of certain definite pieces of work, which shall serve as "types" for the future. All sorts and conditions of women are to have their needs considered; the business woman, the student girl, the office girl, the working

woman and the servant. Housing, employment, laws, social relations, social standards, their recreation, their intellectual and spiritual education will be studied.

FIVE organizations are united. The Conseil National des Femmes Francaises, the National Council of Women, includes one hundred and seventy units throughout France, and in its personnel the most distinguished, the most devoted, and the wealthiest women of France. Les Amies de la Jeune Fille, conducts the traveling girl to her hotel and establishes hostels in many cities. The Federation d'Etudiants includes the sixteen university cities of France, where after the war the problems, especially those of housing and of physical recreation and spiritual cravings, must increase and must be satisfied. The Foyers des Alliees and Foyer Cantine clubs, created by French women and by American women during the war, for the French working women in munition factories and in the big industrial centers, have brought to thousands of homeless women a glimpse of home and have won a recognition from women of other classes. Industrial women must be guaranteed a continuance of that life. The last organization is the Union Chretienne de Jeunes Filles, the French Y. W. C. A., an old Association which has something of the memory of St. Bartholomew still clinging around it.

Out of these two-days' conferences came concrete plans. The Conseil National will undertake in Paris a model house for business women which shall have something of the charm and the intimacy of a woman's club in America. The Amies will create a hostel at Lyon which shall serve business girls, office girls, the younger and larger class of occupied women. The students will establish hostels in Grenoble, in Bordeaux, possibly in Lyon and probably in Strassbourg. The Union Chretienne will develop in Paris a metropolitan building which will serve as a center for the young girls of Paris, the thousands who throng the city streets during the long noon hour, a hostel, a restaurant, a recreation center, in short an American Y. W. C. A. center.

These societies have appointed delegates to a commission which in turn will subdivide, to study the threefold needs of the girl, the three sides of the perfect triangle, physical, recreational, educational, this latter including mental and spiritual. The program is to operate for a period of three months.

THERE were, in these conferences, women from the four corners of France. There were women of varying degrees of faith, Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, non-denominational, *libre penseurs*; there were royalists and socialists, grand dames of exclusive social circles and working women; there were women of many nationalities. A group of distinguished English ladies, members of the World's Committee of the Y. W. C. A., came to share in these conferences that they might be prepared for their work in the world, that they might intelligently share in that reconstruction of the Y. W. C. A., which may be demanded as the Association enlarges

for its world task. Women from Belgium and from Italy came to study methods and to carry back hope and works to the women of their countries. There was, on the last day of the week, a conference of twenty Roumanian women who have held an enforced habitation in Paris during the war, but who are now preparing to go back to Roumania, and who recognize that the women of Roumania must stand with the women of the rest of the world. Their intention is to organize a woman movement, and call it the "Y. W. C. A." In the week it was also decided that what had been done for France by the American Y. W. C. A. should be done for Italy, definite creations such as foyers for working women, hostels for students, Hostess Houses at ports like Trieste and Genoa, with American Y. W. C. A. secretaries in charge.



Group of working girls at the Y. W. C. A. Foyer des Alliees, at Bigarrelles, Bourges, France. Miss Mary Porterfield, Y. W. C. A. Secretary, and Mlle. Borne, the French Women's Superintendent, are at either side of the table

IT is a brimming war chest which the women of America have entrusted to the Y. W. C. A. It is vastly more than American women have ever before had the opportunity to give to the women of the world, and it can go infinitely far in the reconstruction of life for the countries so hurt by war.

There is no woman of any nation, of any creed, of any social rank, who does not know that just as the creation of life is hers, so the continuance of life, its safe guarding, and its betterment, is her right, too, and should be granted her at this moment of the remaking of the world.

The women of America, speaking to the women of the new Christendom, have commissioned the Young Women's Christian Association to serve as their intermediary in this work. It is not a light task and it has been approached in deep humility and in high faith.

Factory or Home

AMERICA has social and industrial problems, but they cannot be compared with those which France is facing to-day," says Miss Emma Chapin, industrial secretary in France for the Young Women's Christian Association.

"Before the war women sewed in their own homes instead of in a big shop. Much of the silk woven in France was not made in great mills, as in the United States, but in homes where the looms have been handed down from generation to generation.

"Mme. Herriot wife of the mayor of Lyons, and Mme. Jusserand have done a marvellous work in giving employment to many women still in their homes, but the situation still looms large.

"French women are out in the industrial world and must be recognized, and the problem will never be solved by shutting one's eyes to the truth and saying that they ought to go back home. Men in one industry are urging equal wages for women, thereby expecting to get their jobs, as they feel that employers would rather hire men than women if they cost no more. Women over here have learned independence and they will stand together for equal treatment in the industrial world."

(Housekeeping On A Business Basis)

(Continued from page 1)

The Industrial Department of the National Y. W. C. A. is planning to call to its staff, sometime in the near future, an expert who will promote further investigation and supervise experiments.

In the interim, the question is receiving the attention of the Central Branch of the Young Women's Christian Association in New York City, which will try out a course for the training of home assistants beginning March 4th, and another fuller course which will begin a few weeks later.

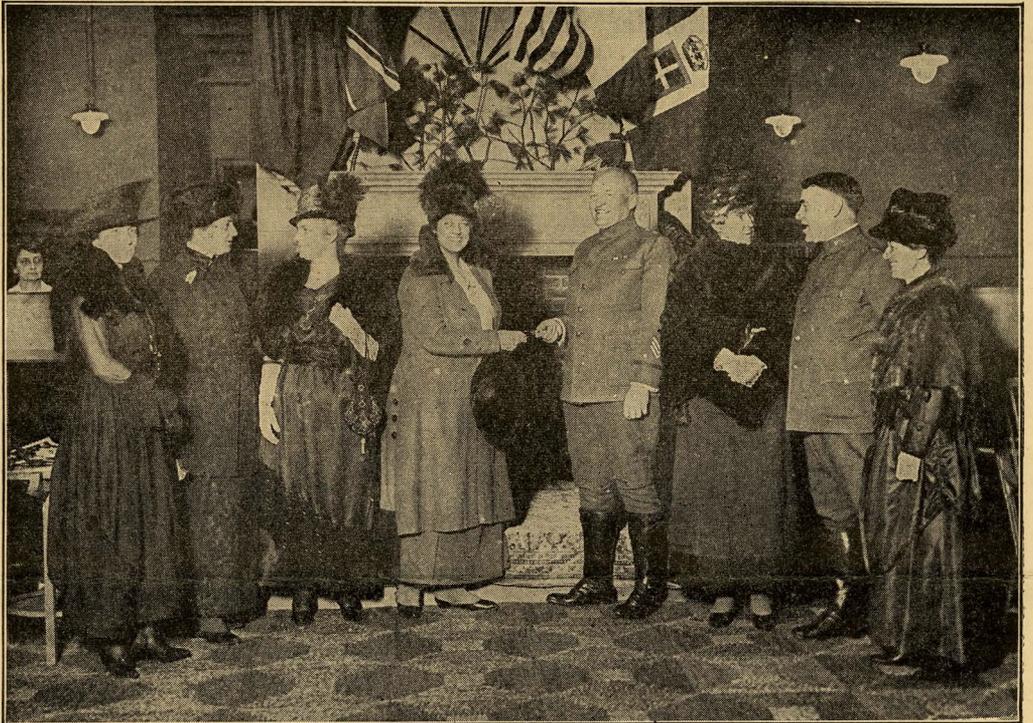
Purpose of the Course

The object of this course is to place domestic service on the same dignified basis as the office positions open to women. The trained home assistant will go into the home by the day, hour or week. She will not live in the home of her employer nor take her meals there. She will have an hour in which to arrange for luncheon just as though she were employed in an office.

The employer will address the home worker by her last name, Miss Smith or Miss Brown, as the case may be.

Offering the same independence as to recreation, hours, places of eating and living as in the business world, housework will have a greater appeal to the average woman.

The course includes plain cooking, waiting on table and door, chamber work, plain sewing, care of the children, making of menus and the washing and ironing of light things. On graduation the student receives a certificate which proves her qualification as a depend-



The Y. W. C. A. presents the Army with the key of its new debarkation Hostess House at Lexington Avenue and 41st street, New York City.

From left to right: Mrs. William Henry Hays, Miss Gertrude Mayo, Mrs. David C. Shanks, Mrs. James S. Cushman, Major-General Shanks, Mrs. William Fellowes Morgan, Major Axton, Mrs. John T. Axton.

able home worker, capable of attending to all ordinary duties in a home.

All over the country the problem of domestic service is receiving the attention of women. In Germantown, Pa., a movement is on foot to provide recreation and club meetings for servants. Parallel movements and discussion groups are being started in Rhode Island, and Boston, while in Chicago one of the newspapers is printing a daily column to which employers may write for advice. The Young Women's Christian Association of Cincinnati is also considering plans for training classes of household workers.

A committee on household employment and education in New York City, composed of members from various organizations including the Y. W. C. A., has invited interested groups of employers to meet and discuss the plans. This committee explains that putting housework on a business basis, and inaugurating an eight-hour day, is not a plan for the rich alone. When a woman can afford only one servant, she must be willing to do her own work part of each day. Of the orders for home assistants filled by the Young Women's Christian Association of New York City between Jan. 6th and Feb. 20th, about 45 per cent. were in households where the assistant would be the only worker.

In view of the increasing demand for domestic labor and the decreasing and totally insufficient supply, this seems to be the crucial time for beginning to apply business methods to the home.

To Carry On

A NEW Y. W. C. A. club for girls employed in the cotton mills of Rossville, Ga., is being promoted by the ammunition girls of Hopewell, Va., who explain in the following letter to the cotton mill girls how they wish to hand down the spirit of the Blue Triangle.

Hopewell,

The Wonder City of Virginia.

Dear Girls:

Greetings from the ammunition girls of Hopewell, who started a Service Club in our Y. W. C. A.

We girls came from all parts of the country to help our Uncle Sam during the war and now that the war is over, we still want our club to continue through *you*, because *we* will be separated as individuals.

We know you will "carry on" the spirit of our club and so we want you to share our family pocketbook. The balance in our treasury (enclosed) will help your club in its infancy and when it grows up, we know that you, in turn, will pass the club spirit on to some other group of girls.

We wish you success in your club and the same good times that we have had in ours.

Cordially,

The Service Club.



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selected by

Sarah Truslow Dickinson

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