

THE PORTLAND Y. W. C. A. IS ACCOMPLISHING GREAT GOOD

Girls in All Classes of Society Reap Benefits Offered by Organization—Inter-Club System Is Aid to Effectiveness.



Use of Callers at Office



East Side Rest Room



Travelers Aid Headquarters at Union Station



Scene in the Cafeteria of the Y.W.C.A.



Callers at The Employment Bureau



Japanese Club of the Y.W.C.A.

BY NAOMI SWEET.

THE purpose of the city department of the Young Women's Christian Association is to advance the physical, social, intellectual and spiritual interests of young women. This purpose is mainly being carried out in a big, broad way that reaches out in all walks of life—from the domestic girl to the society girl. In going through the many departments and classes in the Portland Y. W. C. A. I was met on all sides by the most bewildering, charming galaxy of girls that I had ever seen gathered under one roof. I told him, "Thinking, clever girls can find so much to interest them in a clean, intellectual, enjoyable way that they can really have a first-rate time without cheapening themselves in any way."

It must not be taken that men are barred from the social life of the Y. W. C. A. girls. For there are many girls' clubs, social clubs, who entertain their men friends in their cozy club-rooms.

There are several different girls' clubs in the Y. W. C. A. of Portland. Each club has a membership of from about 15 to 20 girls. These girls are almost entirely business girls. The clubs are purely social and, of course, their aim is always self-improvement. There will be found in these clubs a loan fund for business girls who are financially embarrassed.

Social Evenings Passed.

I was entertained by the girls of the Tri-V. Club the other night, and was simply fascinated by the charm of the girls and immediately carried into the spirit of their fun. The club-room is spacious. There are soft rugs, deep arm chairs, rockers and soft cushions, beautiful pictures and happy, rosy girls. I found the girls very busy that night. They were cracking nuts and stirring something in a chafing dish and some delicious candy was the result. The girls are now taking a course in chafing dish cookery and candy-making.

For the girl who wants to acquire grace and physical development there are the gymnasium and swimming departments. In the gymnasium department, which flourishes under the direction of Miss Alberta Cory, there are classes for the woman of leisure, the school girl, the business girl and the little children of the primary grades. The aim of Miss Cory in training her girls is to give them good carriage, good circulation, good digestion, good respiration, wholesome fun and companionship, clean bodies, clean thoughts and clean friends. No one who watches a gym class through its hour of work can doubt that the girls are more alert and ready to respond to whatever demand is liable to be made of them, because of the control resulting from the general exercises. Fun they must and will have. It is simply an hour of play to every girl who is a member.

Basketball is an enjoyable supplement to the regular gym work. The advanced night class of business girls counts the evening incomplete without a good game of basketball. The Washington High School girls meet every Wednesday and Saturday afternoon under the direction of Miss Cory. Two games were played recently between the Washington High School girls and the night class, the first having a score of 6 to 15 in favor of the latter, and the second standing 7 to 9 in favor of the former. A third game will be played in the near future.

No one can realize what this recreation means to the business girl. One girl said: "If I miss my gym class I can't do my work as well the next day." Another girl said: "I never laugh out loud except when I go to gym class." A girl who holds a very trying position said: "I never could have stood my hard year's work without the gymnasium."

Swimming is popular. In the swimming department under the instruction of Miss Millie Schloth, hundreds of girls come for their daily or semi-weekly swim and shower baths. The average girl learns to swim in from two to three lessons and Miss Schloth, with her big, kind heart and cheerful voice, is always on hand, encouraging ever, so that the most timid and faint-hearted soon forget their fears. When Billie Burke was in Portland she joined the Y. W. C. A. for the sole purpose of going to swimming.

Another "fun" club is the Rain-or-Shiners. This club takes a tramp every Saturday, rain or shine, and an enjoyable feature is that anybody who wants to go on those tramps, whether a member or not. Dr. Mabel Aiken will again lead these trips. Last year 34 girls celebrated the anniversary of the club by having a country dinner, which was engaged beforehand. The tramp this year is arranged on a carline, so that some who are unable to stand a long tramp will be able to ride both ways.

Of course, in the big, broad work of the Association the Travelers' Aid ranks first, in that instead of the girls reaching the Association, the Association reaches the girls. The Y. W. C. A. Travelers' Aid is a separate institution from any other Travelers' Aid, although they all work in unison and assist each other wherever possible. In fact, each Travelers' Aid is greatly dependent on the other.

Girls Are Aided.

The Travelers' Aid department of the Y. W. C. A. is divided into four branches and has placed a station in the Union Station, the North Bank Station, the Oregon Electric Station and

the O. W. P. Station. The biggest work of the Travelers' Aid is in the hands of Miss Caroline Barnum at the Union Station. There are few people who realize what a world-wide movement the Travelers' Aid is. Miss Barnum has all the workings of assisting the helpless traveler on the tips of her fingers.

I was amused to watch Miss Barnum at her work among the foreigners. By the time a foreigner reaches Portland she has traveled through our country enough to learn the most demanded words for American travel. They all know the meaning of "coffee," "address," "tickets," "telephone" and "hotel." With this vocabulary a very interesting conversation can be carried on and if the traveler's education is so neglected that she does not know even these few words, then an interpreter is called.

Miss Barnum has a special invention all of her own that I must say is very ingenious. In carrying on a conversation with a foreigner who cannot understand a word of English, Miss Barnum resorts to the use of this most remarkable device, which is a good-sized watch, a real turnip, with the hour hand taken off. When she wants to ask the traveler what time her train goes or comes, she simply shows her the watch and the person turns the hand around to the hour of her train.

Young and Old Found.

Those who most need the services of the Travelers' Aid are the young girls, helpless old women, children traveling alone, and foreigners not met by their people. Of course this does not bar all other travelers from coming into the way of help from Miss Barnum. For she is always willing to help and only too glad to answer the hundreds of questions that she is called upon to answer during her hours on duty. Miss Barnum has a real love for her work, which makes it a pleasure to be lucky enough to come under her assistance. Her chief worry is about the little children who are sent out to travel alone. It grieves her very much that children as young as six or seven years of age are sent out alone on unnecessary trips, such as to visit relatives or friends. There were 350 children

between the ages of 6 and 14 last year who came into the union station without guardians or any one to meet them.

Miss Barnum has cared for many of these children over night and many times during the day hunted through various parts of the city for the friend or relative who failed to come to meet the child. She does not believe in letting these youngsters who must travel alone travel in the sleeper, for the dangers are many. If they must travel alone, by all means let them travel in the day coach, she says.

There is a great deal of difficulty when a foreigner comes into the city and has only the address of her relatives. Often the address has been changed and then there is a fresh difficulty to be met. Miss Barnum will search the city, but she usually finds the parties by the assistance of the saloonkeepers, whose places the men often frequent. But it takes a lot of Sherlock Holmes work before the deed is accomplished.

One of the worst hindrances in the work of the Travelers' Aid is the "kind helper," who is always cheerfully willing to confuse the traveler with the wrong information. Then, again, there are some travelers who do not need assistance and who, instead of thanking Miss Barnum kindly when she offers her assistance, show their hurt dignity in a very ungracious manner.

Many Friends Made.

But there are few and Miss Barnum is proud to say that she has made many friends of the girl travelers who have been assisted by her, girls who keep in constant correspondence with her and never forget that she saved them from many a pitfall. Miss Barnum wishes it distinctly understood that without the co-operation of the other travelers' aids, the charity organizations and the police departments and railroad help it would be utterly impossible to accomplish the big work that is being done. Every one at the Union Station obeys her slightest wish and she is especially fond of her "boys," as she calls the porters. The "boys" are often misunderstood, she says. They are only too glad to offer their assistance to needy travelers without expecting a tip, though, of

course, when a person is able to give a tip, she is glad to have them get it.

The lines of educational work that are taken up in the building are various. Miss Frank Towlesie, who has charge of several different English classes, is a lively young woman who can stir up a keen interest among her girls and make her subjects most fascinating. There is the class for correct English for business girls who have had to go to work when their education was limited. Choice literature is taken up and studied in detail. The girls soon cultivate their taste for good literature and put in much of their spare time outside of the classes in reading classics. There is a sympathetic understanding between Miss Towlesie and her girls, for she realizes that the stumbling blocks are many for the girls who must have some recreation outside of their business and studies.

Physical Culture Taught.

There is the English and expression class, where voice culture is combined with physical culture and the aim is to give the pupils good posture and expression. Miss Towlesie is an eager teacher and wholly taken up with her work. Under her magnanimous and monotonous voice soon becomes lively and expressive. The girls read and recite all ways from the stage and a graceful poise is readily acquired, for Miss Towlesie observes and corrects each girl individually for any peculiarity in posture or carriage that she may have. Intellectual discussions are taken up in an interesting manner and the girls are trained to give impromptu addresses. Miss Towlesie is most gratified with the rapid progress her girls are making, for girls who now speak in a lively and interesting manner came to her a few months ago with perfectly dead voices.

In the class of English for foreign girls there is a good feeling of comradeship between Miss Towlesie and the girls, many of them with whom she is unable to converse. This class is now doing work equivalent to that of the second grade. Some of these girls can speak English fairly well, but have had no opportunity to learn to read or write it. The brightness and patience of the teacher encourages the girls and

there is also a feeling of sympathy between the girls themselves, who, though of different nationalities, form lasting friendships.

Japanese Class Interests.

I was perfectly fascinated in watching the Japanese club, which meets once a week to study English reading and writing and studying the Bible stories. The corps of teachers of this class is composed wholly of volunteer workers and a separate teacher is supplied for each pupil. The new pupil who does not know a word of English is first taken into the kitchen and taught the names of all the different utensils. The Japanese are very apt and interested and tremble with eagerness to learn. Unconsciously beautiful is the attitude of the fair Western girl as she bends over her dainty little Eastern sister. The teacher is patient and as interested and eager for the pupil to learn as the pupil is herself. There was one dainty little girl, an especially beautiful type of Japanese, who trembled with delight and laughed with glee over her rapidity with which she accomplished her work.

There are several different Bible classes under the direction of Miss Edna Goodwin. There are classes in the building and neighborhood classes which meet in different homes. Religious and moral discussions are taken up and as Miss Goodwin is an animated woman these discussions never are dull. Programmes are often given in the different charitable homes and institutions for the pleasure and enjoyment of the inmates. Friendships are often made between the members which prove lasting.

Musical Club Feature.

There is a mandolin and guitar club under the instructorship of Professor C. Rebagliati. In this club there are used mandolins, mandolas, violins, cello and guitar. The present object of the class is to enlarge with good players. Beginners are not taken into the class, although Professor Rebagliati prepares beginners outside of class. The usual amount of fun finds its way into these classes and Professor Rebagliati is very popular, owing to his earnest teaching.

In the cookery and domestic science

departments various forms of cookery, needlework, sewing and millinery are taught. The employment department is in charge of Miss Constance Wheelton, kind and gentle, whose aim is not to get rid of her applicant as soon as possible, but to find the right place for the right person in the right way.

There are transient rooms for renting in the building and girls who are traveling alone always prefer the rooms in the building to those in a strange hotel. The rooms are always taken. The restroom is of such value to tired women that it is impossible to estimate the good derived from it. Many hardworking girls have been saved from utter breakdown by a half hour of complete relaxation in the restroom. There are several perfectly sanitary soft cots in the restroom provided with quilts and at night these cots are rented to transients for 25 cents a night. It is very pitiful indeed to see the utter exhaustion with which the tired women throw themselves on the beds. I saw one bed which I thought was empty, but on looking again I saw a poor little tired white head, the frail little form scarcely to be traced beneath the light quilts.

The luncheon and cafeteria is popular, not only with the business girl, but with the hurried shopper who knows that she can get clean, wholesome food, which is carefully selected and prepared in a very short time. The places are bright and cheerful and there are fresh, wholesome faces behind the counter, which make it a pleasure to come into the place.

New Branch Opened.

A comparatively new branch of the Y. W. C. A. is the East side branch on Grand avenue and East Taylor street, under the direction of Miss Chaper. The East Side home is not as large and pretentious as the West Side home, but for a more homelike spirit one would have to look far. Situated in the heart of the laundry and factory district the girls employed in these places come into direct benefit of the clubroom. The clubroom is a long room liberally supplied with comfortable furniture and couches, pictures, books and rugs. At the further end there is a big stove and there are always a few happy-looking girls doing a bit of fancy work or sewing gathered around the stove in the cheerful companionship of Miss Chaper, who is much loved. There is a cafeteria in the rear where the factory girls take their nice hot lunch. A piano is at the disposal of the girls and several different clubs of girls who work in the neighborhood meet here for social enjoyment, often entertaining their men friends. There are clubs of embroidery and sewing and some of these supply clothes for the baby homes. Little dramas are prepared which are given in entertainments at the West Side building.

The Y. W. C. A. has a summer home at Gearhart, where self-supporting women can enjoy a vacation at a very nominal price—simply to cover expenses. It must not be forgotten that there are the living-room, on the main floor, where men, as well as women, come to pass a comfortable half hour, and the library, where the studious girl can find choice literature for her few moments of leisure during the day. Every one is familiar with the cheerful smiling face of Miss Lorna Collamore, who sits in the office and usually has a line of people at her desk, seeking for information. That is one of the pleasures in belonging to the association, the pleasure of coming in contact with the clean, wholesome women who are in charge of the different departments.