

HIBBARD ANSWERS CRITICS OF Y. M. C. A.

Explains Charges of Profiteering Made by Returned Soldiers.

ADMITS SOME MISTAKES

Says Gift Tobacco Was Sold Through Quartermaster Mixing His Supplies.

Along with praise of the Y. M. C. A. and its work overseas under the red triangle a good deal of criticism has reached this country. It has come in soldiers' letters, although not so frequently of late as it did last winter and spring, and falls from the lips of this and that young army man as he gets back to New York or sits with the home folks reeling off his treasure of stories and gossip from the war zone.

Most of the "knocking of the Y" comes down to these accusations: That it was profiteering, charging too much for tobacco, chocolate and other dispensations, that its canteens, the some of its men must be grafters, for their prices for tobacco in villages only a couple of miles apart were not uniform; that tobacco sent from the United States for free distribution found its way to the Y. M. C. A. canteens and was sold there; that the Y. M. C. A. ought to give its stuff away free, like some other organizations; that it mingled religion too generously with other parts of its programme; that among its workers were "a lot of draft dodgers or dead ones," and that their salaries were excessive.

Hibbard's Answer. So much talk of this sort has been heard that a Sun reporter went yesterday to Y. M. C. A. headquarters in 847 Madison avenue to see what persons there thought about it. He found C. V. Hibbard, who is associate general secretary of the War Work Council and is in charge of overseas work with the American Expeditionary Forces.

Mr. Hibbard recently returned from two months observation in France. He had heard there all the kicks heretofore listed, and without disparaging the motives of any soldier critic or the work of any other organization, he was only too glad to set forth what he said were the exact facts. This is what Mr. Hibbard said: "When Gen. Pershing ordered us last year to take over the army canteen work, it was practically impossible for our soldiers to buy American tobacco in France. We immediately started tobacco and chocolate on the steamship Kansas, which was lost—our only cargo sunk in the whole war, I believe.

Prices Reduced Steadily. "Since 1917 our prices have been reduced steadily. This is due to the extension of our operations; to an arrangement for shipping materials from America and having them made up in France, as for instance sugar, which French factories combine with chocolate; to the Government's placing at our disposal shipping facilities

which greatly reduced the carrying cost, and to the growing efficiency of our organization. "At the outset we did not anticipate the free distribution of supplies, nor did Gen. Pershing. He recommended that we put our distribution on a strictly business basis. After America had been in the war some time other organizations began to distribute cigarettes and other things without cost to the soldier.

"Service without cost has been our principal object in France, and in conjunction with that we assumed the business of the army canteens on a cost basis. Please remember that, except for the Red Cross, the Y. M. C. A. has incomparably the largest welfare organization in France. We have 6,000 secretaries there, and 1,500 canteens.

Finally Gave Away Cigarettes. "However, in July of this year it was evident that sentiment was changing, for free distribution of supplies by other organizations was welcomed. For several months before the end of the war the Y. M. C. A. gave away cigarettes in the battle zone. I believe that is right.

"Now as to the complaint that we sold cigarettes intended as gifts: Having to buy wherever we could we sometimes bought from the army quartermaster. There were instances in which a soldier, after purchasing cigarettes at one of our canteens, returned and said: 'Here, this stuff is from the Sun Tobacco Fund; I found a card that proves it.'

Why Prices in Villages Differ. "The disparity in prices of tobacco in two neighboring villages is explained by the fact that the cost to us was not uniform. If we got a supply from the Quartermaster we paid only the price it cost the Government, regardless of carrying charges. If we got it from America there were also carrying charges and insurance to pay.

"In Village A we might be selling quartermaster's tobacco, in Village B tobacco we bought in the American market. As the latter cost us more we had to charge more. Naturally the soldier did not understand, naturally it was sometimes said: 'That Y. M. C. A. man at Village B is grafting.' But he wasn't.

"It is true that we found a few dishonest men among our thousands of workers and a few men of bad character in other respects. It could not help but be so. But wrongdoers have been weeded out swiftly and for one reason or another fifty or sixty men have been sent back to the United States in civilian clothes—in disgrace, as we call it.

"Workers who have irritated soldiers by placing too great emphasis on the religious side of our programme have violated our policy. It is perfectly true that some have erred in this regard. We know all about the secretary who goes about asking a soldier if he is saved when the soldier wants to play checkers.

"Our policy—and I believe it to have been well observed on the whole—is to

announce every religious meeting frankly for what it is and to permit no attempt to disguise its character. "As to the personnel of our force in France, the criticism I have heard most often is that we have a lot of huskies who ought to be in the war. Our policy has been not to accept men of draft age unless they are physically disqualified for army service. A man thus disqualified does not always show it; he may look strong and well.

"Our men of draft age who were in France were called up and examined like other Americans. Except for the first weeks, when it seemed possible that the Y. M. C. A. men might be commissioned, we never asked that any man be exempted from the draft no matter how valuable he might be to us.

"The second criticism I have heard is that we have a lot of dead ones. Now that idea arises from the fact that although the ideal man for Y. M. C. A. work overseas is young and spirited we have had to select a large part of the force from those who were too old to get into the army. I can only say that we have done everything in the world we can to get the very best men in the country, that the great majority of them are finely qualified, and that all of them, young or old, are doing the best they know how.

"It would make a story all by itself—an account of the splendid Americans who have gone to France to work under the red triangle. Here's a word about one of them: A certain Colonel of a regiment was not very

friendly to the Y. M. C. A. Perhaps our secretary at headquarters had not been a very good one. We sent another, and he got into the Colonel's good graces. "One day the secretary said to the Colonel, 'I'm sorry, sir, but I have to go back to the United States.' 'Now why in thunder are you going to do a thing like that?' said the Colonel. 'I have kind of got used to having you around.' The secretary didn't want to tell, but finally the Colonel wormed the secret out of him. 'The fact is,' said the secretary, 'that I've got to go back because my State has just elected me Governor.' The secretary was Henry J. Allen of Kansas.

"I have also heard talk of the 'fat salaries' we pay." Mr. Hibbard continued. "The fact is that the secretaries get just as much as we figure they need to keep them going. According to where they are placed they get from \$75 to \$125 a month and pay their own expenses. After paying the living cost they actually have less than the army private's pay of \$30 or \$40 a month.

"If the secretaries have families in this country we send an allowance to them, which is about \$100 a month for a wife and two children. Neither at the bottom nor the top does the Y. M. C. A. pay big salaries. I think the largest is \$7,000 a year. We have men who were earning \$40,000 or \$50,000 a year in their own business.

"Finally let me say that our theory has been that our soldiers do not want charity. I do not believe now that they want it. An occasional man, yes;

but the attitude of most of them is, 'We do not want you to give us these things; we have money enough to buy what we need; just see that we get it at cost, that's all.' Mr. Hibbard thinks that most of the causes of adverse criticism are things of the past, and that all the welfare organizations will be on a better footing when all have to sell what they do sell at the quartermaster's prices, as is now intended.

"JOAN OF ARC" PARK ON DRIVE Three Blocks, Site of Equestrian Statue, Set Aside.

Mayor Hylan yesterday signed a bill passed by the Board of Aldermen designating the eastern side of Riverside Drive between Ninety-second and Ninety-fifth streets as "Joan of Arc Park." It is the site of the equestrian statue of the French national heroine by Anna Hyatt Vaughn. The bill, which was offered by Governor-elect Smith and Alderman Williams of the Thirtieth district, becomes law immediately and sign posts designating the city's newest park are to be erected at once. George F. Kunz, president of the Joan of Arc Statue Committee, issued a statement yesterday thanking the Aldermen for passing the bill and the Mayor for signifying it.

"It is a fitting tribute to France and the memory of Joan of Arc and comes at a most appropriate time when the arrival of President Wilson at the French capital has just been announced," said he.

BAKER ASKS LETTERS TO FRANCE CONTINUE Appeals to Soldiers' Relatives to Keep on Writing.

Keep on writing to the boys in France. Their hardest work is still in front of them and they need encouraging letters from home to help them maintain their morale and present excellent reputation.

This is the gist of an appeal made public yesterday in a letter of Secretary of War Baker to Raymond B. Fowick, chairman of the Commission on Training Camp Activities.

"The eyes of the world are upon our soldiers overseas to-day, not more for what they have done than for what they are now called upon to do," Mr. Baker says. "Before them lie the tasks of helping to rehabilitate the devastated lands of France and Belgium and of making sure that the victory in which they have so gloriously shared shall be a permanent one.

"They need our help and encouragement now perhaps more than at any other time since they left home in order that they may be inspired and strengthened to maintain that fitness of character, manner and conduct which has earned for them such universal respect.

"I believe that among all the influences which may be focused upon this subject, the strongest and most far-reaching is that which emanates from home letters, and I therefore urge the mothers, fathers, wives and sisters of

our soldiers overseas to express themselves earnestly in their letters as their share in seeing that the high standard which America represents both here and abroad shall be constantly upheld."

RUSSIANS DEFEAT JEWS. Star Rejected When Made at Federation Meeting.

A delegate who shouted "All the Jews in Russia should be killed" between sessions of the Federation of Russian Societies in Beethoven Hall, 210 Fifth street, yesterday, did so in the midst of a hubbub caused by a resolution that had been offered, declaring against any dictatorship in Russia.

Between the two causes of excitement, the delegates got so agitated that John Brow, the vice-chairman, had difficulty in getting order when the formal meeting was resumed. Parkor Atroskenwo of Detroit called to Mr. Brow so persistently that he finally made his wish intelligible. It was that the delegate who had spoken harshly of the Jews should be expelled from the federation. By a majority of sixty votes the conference agreed that some action, to be decided upon this morning, should be taken.

Earlier in the day Gen. Oberycheff, formerly in command at Kiev, capital of the Ukraine, said a federated conference assembly was the surest means of stabilizing Russia. He said the Soviet plan was a failure.

BRADY ESTATE REPORT FILED

Y. M. C. A. Claim Not Allowed.—New Institute Gets \$300,000.

Surrogate Fowler approved the report yesterday of Henry W. Jessup, appointed referee to examine the accounts of the Columbia Trust Company, Richard Crowley and Robert L. Gordon, executors and trustees of the will of the late James Buchanan Brady, who died April 13, 1917.

Mr. Jessup finds there is no such institution as "the Broadway Playhouse Hospital of the City of New York," to which Mr. Brady bequeathed \$10,000. The railroad branch of the Y. M. C. A. put in a claim for the bequest. The referee decides that the bequest "falls for uncertainty" and becomes part of the residuary estate. Another bequest of \$10,000 to "the Fresh Air Fund of the City of New York" goes to the Tribune Fresh Air Fund, to which the testator had contributed generously during his lifetime.

Mr. Jessup allows the trustees of Johns Hopkins University to become substituted trustees of a fund of \$300,000 left the university for the establishment of the "James Buchanan Brady Urological Institute." The balance of the estate is \$1,125,160.

Red Flag Down at Potsdam. COPENHAGEN, Dec. 14.—Soldiers of the Prussian Guard have removed the red flag from the town hall at Potsdam where the German Imperial Palace is located, according to a Berlin despatch to-day.

JOIN

Tomorrow morning—Monday

go to the nearest enrolling station for the Red Cross. Join at any "United" or "Schulte" cigar store. Join at any one of more than 500 drug stores. Join at any Child's restaurant—join at any enrolling station—but do it Monday.

Pay your one dollar and get your 1919 button. Then wear your button to business and wear it the entire week.

THE CHRISTMAS ROLL CALL of the RED CROSS

starts tomorrow.

No one is to be solicited again who is wearing his button—everyone is expected to join, but to join once.

It is a campaign for members, not money.

There will be no more money drives.

Full membership is one dollar—your button is your receipt.

Manhattan's quota is every man, woman and child, barring only the hopelessly poor, the criminal and the insane.

No one doubts the huge membership that will result, but it is the last quarter of a million who will be hard to reach—the inaccessible, for example, those living on barge canal boats, night workers, those who are ill, those in the more remote sections, those employed in institutions which must be visited.

If you and all others who are handy will join first thing Monday morning and will then wear your button, it will make it much easier for us to reach that last quarter of a million and make, at the same time, the greatest speed record the city has ever known.

Doubly help by joining Monday.

Wear your button—be sure to wear your button.

All you need is a HEART and a dollar.

Red Cross Christmas Roll Call

DECEMBER 16th to 23rd

New York County Committee, 665 Fifth Avenue



SOUTH AMBOY EXPLOSION

October 5th and 6th: The giant TNT plant at South Amboy was blown to atoms. Eight thousand homeless Eight thousand hungry—and then the dread influenza added to the misery.

The Red Cross was on the job before daylight. Mayor Kerr said: "The prompt arrival of the Red Cross Forces... came as a burst of sunshine in the darkness."

The work of the Red Cross must go on. It will go on. The magnificent organization must be maintained to meet the disasters of the future as it has met the disasters of the past.

In addition, the Red Cross will face thousands demands for the work of social welfare in homes blighted by the world war, both here and abroad.

Red Cross Christmas Roll Call, Dec. 16 to 23.

BROOKLYN'S BEST KNOWN PIANO HOUSE ONE PRICE—NO COMMISSIONS

CHRISTMAS MUSIC

Before It's Too Late

The rigid war restrictions on the manufacture of Pianos, Playerpianos and Talking Machines have been withdrawn since the signing of the Armistice. But musical instruments of reputable character cannot be made in a few weeks and therefore there will be a shortage of

STERLING PIANOS

VICTROLAS and SONORAS

which will be positively impossible to overcome in time to supply all the demands for this Christmas. It means that the only chance to avoid disappointment is to do your buying now.

Fortunately we have a well stocked library of VICTOR RECORDS and MUSIC ROLLS

so that those who have Victrolas or Playerpianos may obtain the very newest music without any trouble. Our Service safeguards your interests and will give you every advantage to be obtained from a long established and reliable business organization.

The Sterling Piano Co. STERLING BUILDING

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