

The
Day Shelter for Unemployed Men
Montreal

A Social Experiment

MONTREAL PARKS
& PLAYGROUNDS ASS'N INC.
Room 205 - 1421 Atwater Avenue MONTREAL

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MCGILL UNIVERSITY

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MONTREAL, QUEBEC, CANADA

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Origin and History

As the Day Shelter for Unemployed Men in Montreal represents what is practically a new departure among the many attempts to meet the unemployment situation in North America and one which has attracted widespread attention and interest on the part of social workers, the present brief description of the Shelter and the work which was carried on in it during the winter of 1931 and 1932 has been prepared. Perhaps other communities faced with similar problems may wish to know how this one has been attacked in this city and what measure of success has been achieved in the attempt to solve it.

During the recent years of serious depression, provision has been made in Montreal through various agencies to supply food, clothing and sleeping accommodation for the unemployed. The cost of this has been defrayed in some cases by government or municipal grants, as in that of the Refuge operated by the Montreal Relief Committee, which is quite distinct from the Day Shelter for Unemployed Men, although both institutions are on Vitre Street. Other agencies are supported by endowments or by private subscriptions.

Still other agencies have undertaken—so far as the means at their disposal permitted—the care of special classes of the unemployed, e.g.—families, unemployed women, office workers, etc.

While the unemployed single men in Montreal have been provided with beds and meals in certain refuges, most of these institutions are obliged to turn the men out into the street each morning as soon as they have had their breakfast in order that the buildings may be swept, fumigated, etc., and set in order for the succeeding night. Accordingly all last winter the unemployed single men—which is the class with which the Day Shelter deals—although as a general rule but poorly clothed, were turned out into the streets even in the coldest weather and were obliged to shift for themselves all day as best they might.

They naturally sought shelter wherever it could be secured, in the waiting rooms of the Railway Stations, in Public Libraries, in shops, or in any covered places on the streets. They were naturally in the way wherever they went and were, in consequence, continually "moved on" and cheived about by the police.

The great majority of these men were out of work through no fault of their own, they could not get work because there was no work to be had. Such being the case, the harsh conditions under which they found themselves naturally led to a sense of ill treatment and resentment and, in the case of some of them, to attempts to better their condition through various criminal acts.

Early in the Fall of 1931, Captain William Bowie, Executive Secretary of the Montreal Parks and Playgrounds Association, inaugurated a movement to bring this undesirable state of affairs to a close by the provision of some place where the unemployed single men in the city might go during the daytime, when denied access to the buildings where they slept and had their meals.

The use of a suitable building was secured through the kindly interest of Mr. K. B. Thornton, General Manager of the Montreal Tramways Company. Mr. Thornton had been greatly concerned over the plight of the unemployed and, on behalf of his company, had gladly placed the old St. Laurent School at the service of the Day Shelter Committee. The building occupied an entire city block in a poor part of the business section of the city, facing on Vitre Street and being bounded on the other three sides by Chenneville, Cote, and Lagauchetièrè Streets. The building itself was of low structure varying from two to four stories in height, running around the four sides of the square with an open space—formerly the playground of the school—in the centre.

Two hundred and fifty years ago this part of Montreal presented a very different appearance to that which it now exhibits. In 1702 Paul Le Moyne de Maricourt, who was born in Ville Marie (Montreal) in 1663, a son of Charles Le Moyne and a brother of the first Baron de Longueuil, built here a mansion which he named "Près-de-Ville." It stood in a fine property which was much admired, and which was planted with lovely gardens. These extended down to the bank of a little stream which took its rise in a small lake occupying the present site of the Place Viger and which flowed down what is now Craig Street to Victoria Square and thence by McGill Street to the St. Lawrence. At the foot of this property there was a bridge thrown over the stream. On the other side of the stream, about half way up the slope rising to the present location of the Bank of Montreal and the Royal Trust, was the wooden palisade built in 1685 by Governor M. de Callière to protect Montreal from the raids of the Iroquois and of the English living in the State of New York. This palisade was at the time in question out of repair and was replaced in 1716 by a stone wall, which, like the palisade, followed what is now the course of Fortification Lane. One of the old plans shows "Près-de-Ville" and next to it another building marked "Ecole des Frères de la Doctrine Chrétiènne." Both were built of stone. The old

St. Laurent School building occupied by the Shelter stands on the site of these ancient and historic buildings whose memory carries us back to a time only sixty years after the foundation of the City of Montreal by the Sieur de Maisonneuve, which took place in the year 1642. The rest of the building is of much later date and of inferior construction.

The property was bought some years ago by the Montreal Tramways Company to be used later in the extension of their plant, but the buildings were unoccupied last Fall.

The Management of the Company, being ready to do anything in its power to alleviate the distress caused by the prevailing unemployment, when approached at once gave its consent to the proposal that the building should be used during the winter as a Shelter for Unemployed Men and also signified its readiness to put the building in good order for that purpose and proceeded to do so at a cost of approximately \$1200. This action of the Montreal Tramways Company is worthy of the highest commendation and may well serve as an example to large corporations in other cities, many of whom have unused buildings at their disposal which might be employed for a similar purpose.

A building admirably suited for the needs of the work having thus been secured, a Committee for the organization and conduct of the Shelter was brought into being under the auspices of the Council of Social Agencies of Montreal. The personnel of this was as follows:—

Executive Committee

Dr. Frank D. Adams, *Chairman*; Geo. S. Mooney, *Vice-Chairman*; Father Jos. Fallon, Dr. Frank Pedley, Carl Ruckman, Rabbi H. Stern, Arthur W. McMaster. *Chairmen of Committees*—*House*, C. H. Colson; *Library*, Dr. W. A. Gifford; *Physical Activities*, W. F. Shepherd; *Education*, Rev. G. Guiton; *Foreign Department*, D. J. Van Bommel. A. Stanley Rough, *Superintendent*; T. Morley Ewing, *Assistant Superintendent*; W. F. Shepherd, *Assistant Treasurer*; William Bowie, *Secretary*,

It was decided that the building should be officially designated as the *Day Shelter for Unemployed Men*.

Development of the Work

The Shelter was opened on October 27, 1931, and closed on April 29, 1932.

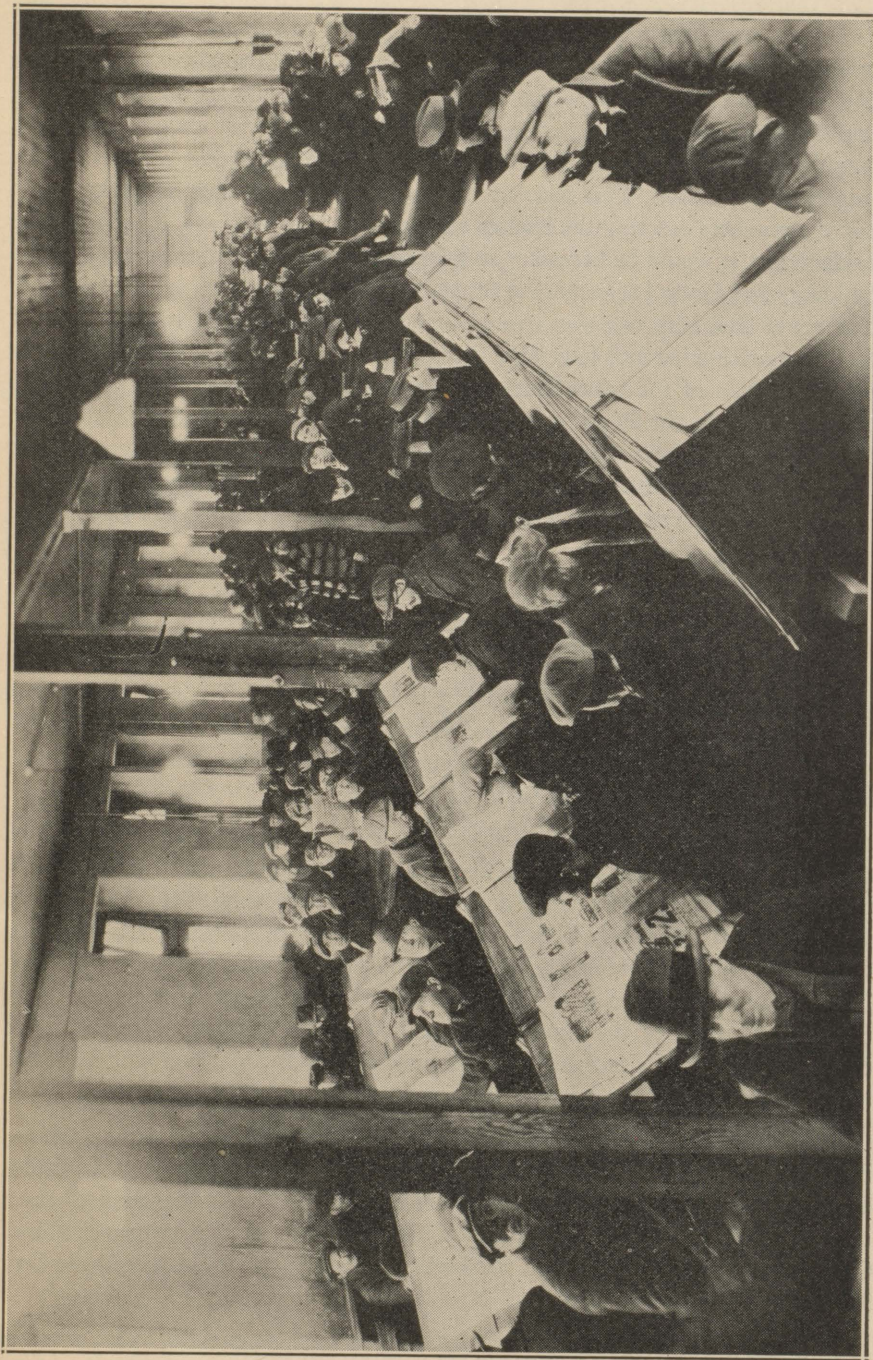
Not knowing how many men would avail themselves of the accommodation afforded by the Shelter, the Committee decided first to open up only that portion of the building facing on Vitre Street, which embraced approximately one-quarter of the space available. Lumber was obtained by gift, or purchased at a low price from benevolently-minded lumber firms, a number of carpenters were secured from among the ranks of the unemployed men and several hundred rough tables and benches were made by them. The partitions on the first and second floors

of the building were torn out and one very long and well lighted room was thus secured on each floor. From the lower room, an entrance hall, no larger than necessary, was cut off from one end, having a long counter opposite the door behind which the Superintendent and his assistants took up their position. The necessary sanitary arrangements were installed in a space cut off from the other end. This long room was then furnished with tables and benches which afforded seating accommodation for some five hundred men. Checker boards were stencilled on the planed surface of some of these tables, while the others were left blank. An elevated desk was placed at one end of the room, at which there was stationed a reliable man, also selected from the crowd of the unemployed. He was supplied with a large number of packs of cards and boxes of checkers. Any man could obtain a pack of cards or a box of checkers by depositing at this desk his entrance card, which was returned to him when he brought back the cards or checkers. This man had general charge of this room and reported to the Superintendent any irregularities or breaches of the regulations.

The second floor was arranged as a library and reading room. A small portion cut off at one end and provided with the necessary shelving, accommodated the Librarian and the books and magazines under his charge. The rest of the room was furnished with tables and desks at which the men could sit down and read the books and magazines which they could obtain from the Librarian or his assistants, or they could read the daily papers, a certain number of copies of which were supplied gratis by their respective publishers. There were also special tables at which the men could write letters; pen, ink, paper and postage stamps being supplied by the Shelter.

The third or top floor of this part of the building had been fitted up as a theatre or concert hall by the authorities of the school. This was, however, in a very dilapidated condition. It was noticed that so soon as the men came to know something of one another a few days after the opening of the Shelter, small groups commenced to give little amateur performances in some of the rooms. It was accordingly decided to open this old concert hall. It was cleaned out and furnished with benches like those in the rooms below. The services of several graduates and students of the Department of Architecture of McGill University were enlisted and these gentlemen painted new scenery and decorations for the stage, and in the course of a few days the hall was ready for use. It had a seating capacity for 650 persons and was crowded every day from the time that it was opened.

Within a few days of the opening, the first "wing" of the Shelter became congested, from 3000 to 3500 men entering it every day. There was not seating accommodation for more than 60 per cent of them. The rest walked about in the passages, sat on the window ledges or hot water pipes, so that it was almost impossible to get through the crowd, or get about in the building. It was evidently "meeting a long felt need."



One of the Reading Rooms

The Committee at once cleared out the second section of the building, that facing on Chenneville Street. This was two stories high. The lower flat consisted of a single enormous room, which was furnished for playing cards and checkers, duplicating in every respect that just described in Vitre Street wing. In the same way the second floor was equipped as a second great reading room with its papers, magazines and books. This relieved the congestion for a couple of weeks longer but the numbers entering the Shelter increased continuously and it soon became evident that it would be necessary to take occupation of the third section of the building, that facing Lagauchetiere Street. This was also a two storied building. The lower floor here was also arranged for cards and checkers, while the upper floor was subdivided into four large rooms, three of these being set aside for the accommodation of the educational work which the Committee had decided to inaugurate, while the fourth was used as a dormitory for the working staff of the Shelter, it having been found advisable to provide sleeping accommodation for these men in the Shelter itself. These three sides of the building were found to supply all the accommodation required, so that the fourth side was left unoccupied.

Number of Men Using the Shelter and Their Racial Affinities

It was impossible without resorting to a complicated system of registration to determine the actual number of individual men who made use of the Shelter. It was, however, easy to determine the number of men who entered the building each day and this was done at frequent intervals.

The Shelter was opened on October 28, 1931, and during the first few days the number entering averaged daily about 2000. These numbers however rapidly increased, the average daily entry during the first month being 3966. By the third week of February the daily average was 10,614. In the first week of March it had fallen to 8,514. On Wednesday, March 9, the millionth man entered the Shelter. These numbers however give an exaggerated idea of the actual number of men using the Shelter, for the same man often entered the building more than once on the same day. It is probable that the number of individual men who made use of the Shelter on any one day was not over 5000.

The men who used the Shelter may be arranged as to race in three classes—French-Canadians, English-speaking men and foreigners from various European countries. A detailed registration of these nationalities was not attempted since this was kept by the Montreal Relief Committee at their Emergency Relief Centre on Vitre Street, the men from which generally spent the day in the Day Shelter for Unemployed Men.

The total registration at this Relief Centre from August 10, 1931, when it was opened until March 1, 1932, for which data the writer is indebted to Mr.

W. A. Irwin, Assistant Manager of the Montreal Relief Committee, was as follows:—

Montreal Relief Committee Nationality Figures.

Total Registrations from August 10, 1931, to February 29, 1932

| | | | |
|----------------------------|------|--|------------|
| French Canadian | 6869 | | 35.93 p.c. |
| English Canadian | 3499 | | 18.30 p.c. |
| British | 3005 | | 15.72 p.c. |
| U.S.A. | 113 | | |
| Germany | 170 | | |
| Poland | 563 | | |
| Roumania | 102 | | |
| Finland | 819 | | |
| Hungary | 826 | | |
| Czecho-Slovakia | 1295 | | |
| France | 23 | | |
| Denmark | 83 | | |
| Holland | 17 | | |
| Jugo Slavia | 233 | | |
| Ukranian | 866 | | |
| Sweden | 118 | | |
| Lethunia | 95 | | |
| Russia | 90 | | |
| Norway | 124 | } 744 30.04 p.c. (32 Nationalities) | |
| Bulgaria | 105 | | |
| Austria | 26 | | |
| Switzerland | 32 | | |
| Esthonia | 9 | | |
| Belgium | 12 | | |
| Spain | 10 | | |
| Latvia | 5 | | |
| Syria | 1 | | |
| Japan | 3 | | |
| Luxemburg | 1 | | |
| China | 2 | | |
| Italy | 85 | | |
| Argentine | 1 | | |
| Greece | 5 | | |
| Armenia | 2 | | |
| Turkey | 3 | | |

19,117

99.99

As will be noted, French Canadians, English speaking men and Foreigners each constitute almost exactly one-third of the total number—English speaking Canadians being only 18.30 p.c. of the whole.

No less than 32 nations are represented among these foreigners, but two-thirds of these foreigners come from four countries—namely Czecho-Slovakia, Finland, Hungary and Ukania.

An enumeration of the first 2500 entering the Day Shelter on the morning of February 23, was made to ascertain the number who spoke French, English and other languages respectively. This gave the following result:

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------|
| French Canadians | 49 p.c. |
| English speaking men | 29 p.c. |
| Foreigners | 22 p.c. |

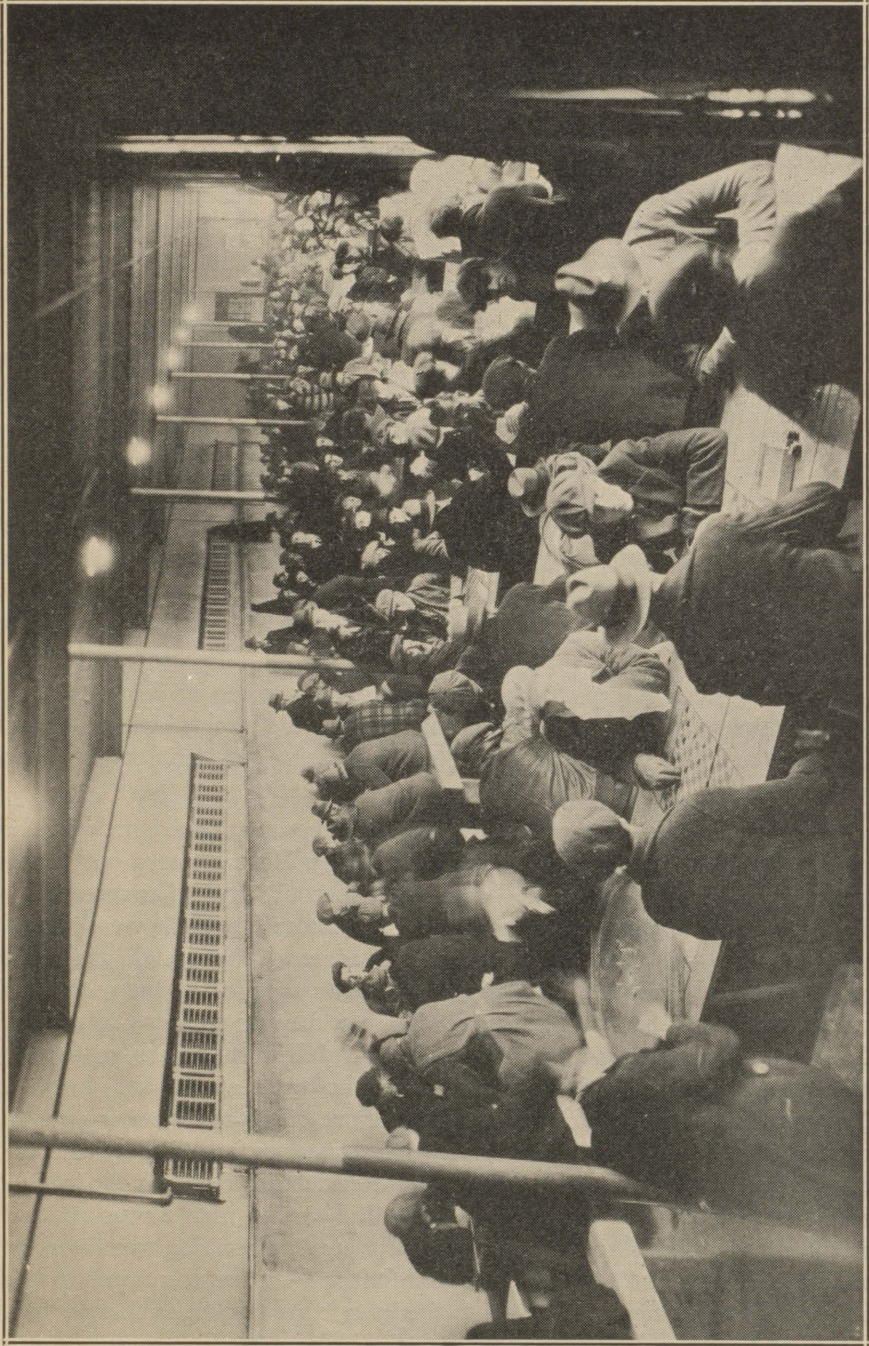
This shows a rather larger proportion of French Canadians and smaller number of foreigners than in the table given above, which may be due in part to the presence in the Shelter of a number of French Canadian unemployed who do not take their meals and sleep at the Montreal Relief Committee Centre, but who reside in their own lodgings or homes and come to the Shelter for the day.

McGill University having undertaken, through Professor Marsh and his assistants, a comprehensive study of the whole problem of unemployment in Canada, and more especially in the district about Montreal, the officers of the Shelter, and more particularly Mr. Ewing, the Assistant Superintendent, have, it is believed, afforded valuable aid to the University in obtaining the life histories of several hundred of the men in the Shelter with a view to securing accurate data concerning the causes of unemployment in their respective cases, as typical of those of the various classes of men who make up the ranks of the unemployed in Eastern Canada at the present time.

Activities in the Shelter

When an enormous number of men such as this are brought together it is necessary to provide something which will occupy their time—their “enforced leisure,” it might perhaps be called. “Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do” and he should never be allowed to have any more leeway than necessary.

Cards and checkers were, therefore, as has been mentioned, provided for those who wished to employ their time in this way, while books, magazines and the daily papers were furnished to those who desired to read, and a concert hall was equipped. Gramophones were also installed in several of the rooms to provide what the men considered to be a more cheerful atmosphere. An appeal issued through the public press resulted in the sending in to the Shelter, by well wishers throughout the city, 3000 packs of used cards, 60,000 magazines, 1000 gramophone records and 8 gramophones.



One of the Rooms for Cards and Checkers

The card and checker rooms were crowded with players throughout the entire winter. More "Rummy" was probably played here than in all the rest of Montreal put together and they found it quite possible to play without "points." Every day on an average about 2600 packs of cards and 1600 boxes of checkers were given out.

The reading rooms were also continuously filled. There is no reading room in Montreal and probably none in Canada where so many people read every day. There were days on which as many as 950 readers were in the reading rooms at one time. The daily papers were regularly perused, while as time went on the books were ever in greater demand. The magazines, however—as with the general public everywhere—were chiefly desired, although only the better class of magazines were given out. While most of the reading matter was printed in English, a full supply of good French books and magazines were also available, as well as others in Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, Polish, Yiddish, German and Italian.

The library had approximately two thousand volumes on its shelves. While a number of the men read really good literature, books of adventure and detective stories, here as in most other places, were especially sought. On an average about 2200 books and magazines were issued to readers each day and returned in the evening.

Writing paper and envelopes were also provided in the reading rooms and special tables set aside for men who wished to write. Twelve hundred letters were written by the men each month, the postage being provided from the funds of the Shelter.

In the Theatre or Concert Hall, which, as has been mentioned, occupied the upper floor of the portion of the building facing on Vitre Street, a continuous performance was given every week-day from 3 p.m. till 5 p.m. This consisted of short plays and sketches, songs (in which the audience frequently were invited to join), dances and various other "items" such as are to be seen on the vaudeville stage. Many of these were distinctly clever and amusing and all the performers were drawn from the men themselves. The tap dancing was especially good. The female parts were taken by the men, who attired themselves according to their conception of the latest fashions, strict decorum however being always observed. The stage with a group of actors is shown in one of the accompanying photographs. The "ladies" on one occasion entered themselves for a "beauty competition" in which the prize was awarded to the competitor receiving the loudest round of applause from the audience. The hall, as has been mentioned, had seating capacity for 650 persons and tickets for each performance were issued at the office to the first 650 men who applied for them—a special entrance to this hall was opened up from the front of the building to prevent the confusion which would be caused by men passing through the building itself. A queue of men entering the hall is shown in another of the photographs. On three or four

occasions each week the Superintendent spoke briefly to the men or led them in community singing. On Sunday afternoon a Concert was always given by persons not connected with the Shelter. This consisted largely of sacred music or at least of a more serious type of music than that presented during the week days. In some cases the whole programme consisted of classical music which was apparently appreciated by the men, who at least listened to it quietly and attentively.

The Shelter also had a vocal quartet and orchestra, the members of both of these organizations being drawn from the unemployed men coming to the Shelter. The former not only sang frequently in the Shelter itself but also with marked acceptance to a great congregation in St. James United Church one Sunday evening and subsequently before one of the Service Clubs of the city.

Christmas Day was observed with special festivities—the building was decorated throughout and a package of tobacco was presented to every man. Until the snow fell the central playground was, throughout the entire day, filled with men playing football, baseball or quoits. When the cold weather set in, it was intended to flood an old skating rink on this playground, but in attempting to do so it was found that its substructure was in bad repair so that the water drained into the cellars of the building. It was therefore necessary to give up this undertaking.

With the coming of the Spring, however, and the disappearance of the snow, the theatre was closed and the men again reverted to the playground. Early one morning a large gang of men was busy raking it over, removing all the refuse which had accumulated during the winter, and filling in the damp hollows with sawdust and ashes. A series of baseball matches were then arranged between teams made up of the men themselves and these were watched by an enthusiastic audience of some seven hundred men who could find standing room around the sides of the playground, while a host of others viewed the progress of the games from the windows and galleries of the building. The policeman was one of the star players. This particular series culminated in a most exciting contest between two teams, one drawn from the staff and the other from the men. There were seven innings and the playground rang with yells and whoops that in the days of *Maisonneuve* would have struck terror into the hearts of the citizens of *Ville Marie*, but these came not from painted savages but from the audience just mentioned, acclaiming the victory of "The World" over "The Staff" by a score of thirty-three to sixteen.

Educational Classes

So soon as the various activities referred to above were running smoothly, the Committee turned its attention to providing educational classes for any men who desired to employ their time in acquiring knowledge which would be of advantage to them in fitting them for better positions than those which they had held in the past, so soon as conditions of employment again improved.

Competent teachers were secured and classes were started in the following subjects:—

English for Foreigners
French—elementary and advanced
Elementary Bookkeeping
Arithmetic
Shorthand
Automotive Engineering

The men were urged to enter these classes but it was found—as might be expected—that the great majority did not care to do so. They shrugged their shoulders and said “What’s the good?” The Committee then offered to start classes in any other subjects in which they were interested, but no requests were forthcoming. About seven hundred and fifty did enter their names for one or other of the courses of study listed above—most of these however came once or twice and then dropped out. Some two hundred however joined the educational classes and attended regularly until the classes closed on April 1st. They were closed on this date because by that time most of these men—being the most intelligent men in the Shelter—had obtained work and arrangements were made for the few that remained to continue their educational courses in various other institutions. It is interesting to note—as a piece of social information—that in this great body of men, representing the unemployed single men thrown out of employment in a time of great economic depression in the City of Montreal, only about five per cent were desirous of obtaining a better education and willing to make the sustained mental effort which would be required to do so.

In this connection, however, it should be remembered that these are, for the most part, the lowest, poorest and most unprogressive part of the community and that such being the case, while they were not seekers after knowledge, their quiet and excellent deportment in the Shelter during the winter shows that they are a part of the community which, even in times of deep distress, will behave itself properly and in a law abiding manner if decently and fairly treated. The largest classes were those in Elementary English and Automotive Engineering. The former was a class attended exclusively by foreigners who in it were taught to speak English. This was one of the best and most interesting pieces of educational work carried on in the Shelter. The men had an excellent teacher and it was almost pathetic to see the keenness displayed by them to learn the language of the new country to which they had come to take up their abode. They, consequently, made surprisingly rapid progress. The class in what was termed Automotive Engineering was one in which an extended course of instruction was given on the motor car and its internal combustion engine and especially on the construction, maintenance and repair of the latter. This class had an enrolment of seventy. The men received a minimum of three hours of instruction daily. A Chevrolet car was given by Mr. E. Mildenhall and spare parts or tools



A Game of Checkers

were presented by the Ford Motor Company, the General Motors Company, Messrs. Lewis Brothers, and the Canadian Fairbanks-Morse Company. A small machine shop was established for the class, and the men were taken to hear lectures and to visit different repair shops and machine shops in the city. Many of these men thus trained were taken on by motor car companies when the Shelter closed down.

On going through the Shelter it was found that there were a number of young men of the "White Collar Class" who had already received a fair education. Some others belonged to good families and others were still mere boys. These were taken out of the Shelter and special classes were set up for them at Strathcona Hall, the home of the Student Christian Association of McGill University. This was arranged by the Rev. Mr. Guiton, who was in charge of the educational work at the Shelter, and these men were thenceforth cared for by other agencies.

Finances

As has been already stated the Montreal Tramways Company provided the building which was converted into the Day Shelter and put the building into a thorough state of repair at a cost to the Company of \$1,200.

To furnish and equip this building after it was taken over cost the Committee approximately \$1,500.

When it was furnished and equipped it cost \$1,775 per month to operate it. The largest item in the operating expenses was the salaries of some thirty-five men who constituted the staff. These ranged from \$100 a month paid to a few of the officers in the most responsible positions, to \$15 a month for the men in charge of the rooms and who were responsible for care and cleaning of the building. This item of salaries amounted to \$915 per month.

Other large items in the operating charges were fuel, light, postage and cleaning equipment.

The funds to equip and operate the Shelter were obtained from the following sources. These figures for purposes of simplicity are here stated approximately, the detailed Statement of Receipts and Disbursements follows:

| | |
|--|------------|
| From the Emergency Relief Fund provided by the Federal Government, the Provincial Government and the City..... | \$2,000.00 |
| From the Anglican Churches, chiefly for educational classes..... | 1,000.00 |
| From the United Church of Canada for the Library and Reading Room..... | 1,100.00 |
| From the Montreal Parks & Playgrounds Association—salaries..... | 1,000.00 |
| Special subscriptions from friends of the Shelter in Montreal..... | 6,922.00 |

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

(From October 27, 1931 to April 30, 1932)

RECEIPTS:

| | | |
|--|----------|-------------|
| Playgrounds Association | \$925.00 | |
| Government Grants—Dom., Prov. and City | 2,000.00 | |
| Library Donations | 1,283.00 | |
| Entertainment Donations | 250.00 | |
| Educational Donations | 750.00 | |
| General Donations | 6,922.00 | |
| | | \$12,130.00 |

DISBURSEMENTS:

| | | |
|----------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Wages | \$5,820.00 | |
| Sundries | 514.07 | |
| Lumber | 773.71 | |
| Cleaning Material, etc | 354.48 | |
| Hardware, etc | 431.89 | |
| Library—Stamps | 346.80 | |
| Theatre | 852.59 | |
| Other Entertainment | 150.00 | |
| Coal | 1,337.79 | |
| Meals | 112.39 | |
| Office Supplies | 51.73 | |
| Cartage, Carfare, etc | 66.29 | |
| Tobacco (Xmas) | 98.80 | |
| Light | 469.46 | |
| Educational Work | 750.00 | |
| | | \$12,130.00 |

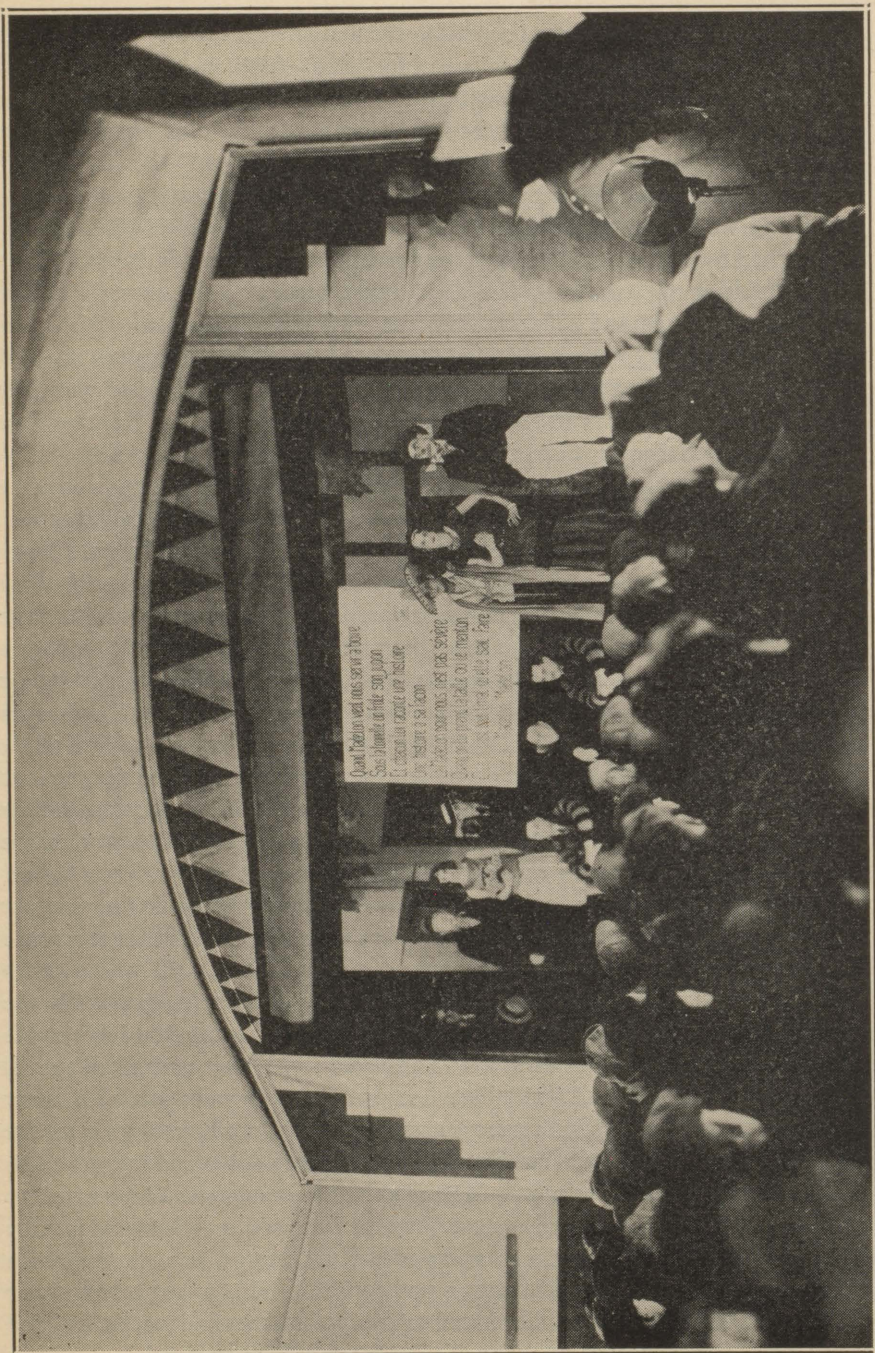
The Humanities

On the first day the Shelter was opened a thousand or more men came in as a cat comes into a larder when she thinks the dog may be behind the door. They strolled about suspiciously and then went out. Later they returned, the men in charge seemed to be harmless and smiled on them. They got some packs of cards and had a few games. They came back every day for a week. The thing seemed to be all right now. There was no sign that it was a place where the government was going to try to entrap them in order to send them to the Japanese War or to a camp on the shore of Hudson's Bay. That these fears were actually in their mind was confessed later by two of these men. By the end of a month all suspicions had been dispatched; the staff treated them well and were all friendly

to them, never hustled them about but always addressed them as "Gentlemen," which was a shock to them at first, but they rapidly responded to the challenge. They came and went as they liked. The Shelter became their club and they felt at home and were happy. It was a new and rather wonderful experience to most of them. They commenced to make little presents to the superintendent and members of the staff, one of their two bananas or a pipeful of habitant tobacco, and they "loosened up." Then the voices in the jungle commenced to be heard.

When the work of the day had got well under way the Superintendent, in his red and grey striped sweater, lighted his pipe and sauntered through the crowd. Each of the great rooms had come to take on a more or less distinct and individual character. In the card room in the third "wing" of the building the men seemed to be a rather higher type than the average. They scarcely ever looked up from their games and were evidently intent on playing as well as possible. The same men came back to this room day after day.

Passing from this into the adjacent room, that on Chenneville Street, the card and checker players are not quite so intent on their games but stop to chat from time to time. At the end of the room there is a group huddled around a small gramophone. They return every day and always listen most intently to the seraphic strains, fearful apparently lest they miss a single note. Halfway down the room, at a long table directly opposite the elevated desk occupied by the man in charge, every afternoon may be seen a unique social function—a dining club meets there, the members of which are already this morning preparing for the coming event. They have separated and each has gone in search of material for the feast. One is strolling down to the Bonsecours Market, where his forlorn appearance will move one or other of the butchers to give him some odd scraps of meat. These are wrapped in a piece of newspaper which has blown down the street, and are hidden in the recesses of his exiguous garments. The others know places where some crusts of bread, a carrot, or a couple of potatoes can be obtained—at a certain hour they will all be back. The club has possessed itself of an old tin can without a handle. This is produced and the party assemble in the old playground; there scraping away the snow, one lights a fire while the others bring bits of wood or paper to feed it. The pot is filled with water and the united contributions of the whole party are placed in it, where they are boiled and then stewed down to a fragrant ragout, which, when done to a turn, is placed in state in the middle of the aforesaid table while the party sitting around it eat it as best they may. They then sit back with that serene smile which follows a good and well-earned meal. "Shall I not take mine ease in my inn?" They get their two meals a day elsewhere, but this has the additional charm of a picnic and it is furthermore a meal over which one does not need to hurry. At the other end of the room is a flat place on the top of an old wall where usually there is some happy man who has secured a supply of "shag" tobacco and is cutting it up and distributing it as a welcome gifts to his friends, for generosity is a prevailing virtue here.



Quel l'occhio vedo, non so se vi è bene
Suo il bianco di fine, ogni giorno
Li c'è con un'acqua, una macchina
Una misura è su, con
L'occhio non può, non può scappare
Com'è, non può, non può scappare
Com'è, non può, non può scappare

The Stage of the Theatre

Two men left the Shelter one day in the middle of the winter—one had an overcoat but the other had not and was thinly clad. After walking two or three blocks, the man with the coat was observed to take it off and put it on his friend and they went on. At the end of the next three blocks, the coat was given back to its original possessor and this continued till they reached their destination. In every church in Europe dedicated to St. Martin there is a picture representing that act of wonderful generosity on the part of the Saint which has been considered worthy of commemoration down through all the ages. St. Martin was a knight and was on horseback, clad as a knight should be. He meets a beggar who is almost naked and suffering from the cold. The knight stops his horse, draws his sword, and with it cutting his gorgeous mantle in two gives one half to the beggar. It would seem that these two men from the Shelter were one point ahead of St. Martin in this generosity competition, for the Saint at least had another good mantle at home and could ride quickly back and get it.

As the Superintendent continues his way through the various rooms he passes the time of day with a man here and there and they have a talk together. The first is a man who used to work in a grain elevator in Alberta. Work failing and hearing, as so many men seem to do in the West that there was work in Montreal, he comes here, only to find none. He has, however, heard that the government is going to undertake some big pieces of work in British Columbia and so, as soon as the cold weather breaks, he will get on a C.P.R. box or flat car and seek his fortune once more in the far west. This man is one of a large class among the unemployed in Canada who will not hesitate to go hundreds of miles, or indeed across the whole continent on an open car in search of work. He says that the Company used to view this mode of travel with disfavour but now they do not offer any objection to it. It is no longer necessary to hide away on the rods beneath the car, you may ride on instead of under it. He prefers a flat car to the top of a box car, especially in cold weather, because on it you can get shelter from the wind under the lee of the next box car ahead. In the meantime he is one of the "announcers" in the theatre of the Shelter.

The next man confides to the Superintendent that he is anxious for the summer to come that he may once more get to work and earn some money. He came from a little town in Ontario where he held a responsible position in a small business enterprise. He had a nice little house in the town and a small bungalow in the country where his family went in summer. When the hard times came the business in question collapsed completely—it was closed down and everyone was discharged. He gave all the money he had to his wife and came to Montreal to retrieve his fortunes. He could, however, find no work and sank lower month by month. Now all is gone and, in the interests of his family, he dare not return home in rags. When the summer comes he hopes to be able to get a decent suit of clothes, return home and if the times become a little better find work there and re-establish himself, no one knowing the depths to which he has fallen. There are many others in the Shelter in exactly the same position.

And so the officers of the Shelter hear the stories of other men day by day. Some talk because it relieves them to unburden themselves to one whom they have come to regard as a friend. Their monologue, however, is frequently like a bunch of Excelsior packing—it has no beginning or end and is made up of little threads with no connection with one another.

But there is a small group who are thinking out a plan—splendid and romantic—the development of which serves to relieve the present monotony. In the window of the C.P.R. office in the Dominion Square Bldg. there is a picture, set forth in beautiful colors, which shows a steamship sailing through the West Indian Islands. The scenery is wonderfully beautiful, the climate warm and balmy, the palm trees and the tropical foliage look entrancing. The charms of travel there are set forth on the accompanying advertisements and a map is there showing a whole archipelago of little islands. If people who have wealth go there to spend the winter, why cannot they go there too in their own way? Why indeed? The same spirit moves them that moved the men that sailed with Drake to the Spanish Main. True, there is no Spanish gold to be had now but there are all the things that this gold would buy. They are planning so soon as the winter is past to go to Halifax, get work in the shipping there and pool their earnings. In the fall when the work slackens up they will be in a position to buy or hire some kind of a boat and sail away South. They will be able to provision themselves with the rest of the savings and may get some work down there as well.

Then upstairs in the reading room is a little old man who sits in one spot and reads incessantly all and every day. In the library there is an Encyclopedia. He is engaged in reading it through systematically—he has already reached the letter M. He now knows something about everything in the world, the name of which commences with any letter of the alphabet before that. If he can finish the last volume before the Shelter closes he will rival Hermes Trismegistus, who was said by the ancients to be the possessor of a third part of all human knowledge. What a store of knowledge! How many new things to think of! His winter has not been wasted.

Among the foreign men there is a large number whose history is very similar to that of J. K. This man is 34 years of age and came from Bohemia, having been born in Prague. He received a public school education and then followed a special business course and, at the age of 17, took a position as a clerk in a firm of forwarding agents. He was attracted to Canada through advertisements displayed in shipping offices and other agencies in Prague, setting Canada forth as a land of opportunity for those who desired to engage in work of any kind, and especially for those who would take up farming. He therefore left his situation and in 1927 came to Canada, going directly to Saskatoon and paying his own passage all the way. He worked on a farm for two years but was disappointed with the wages that he could obtain and decided to go back to clerical work and so came east to Toronto, where, however, he could find no employment in this line, but after three weeks search secured work as an orderly in the General

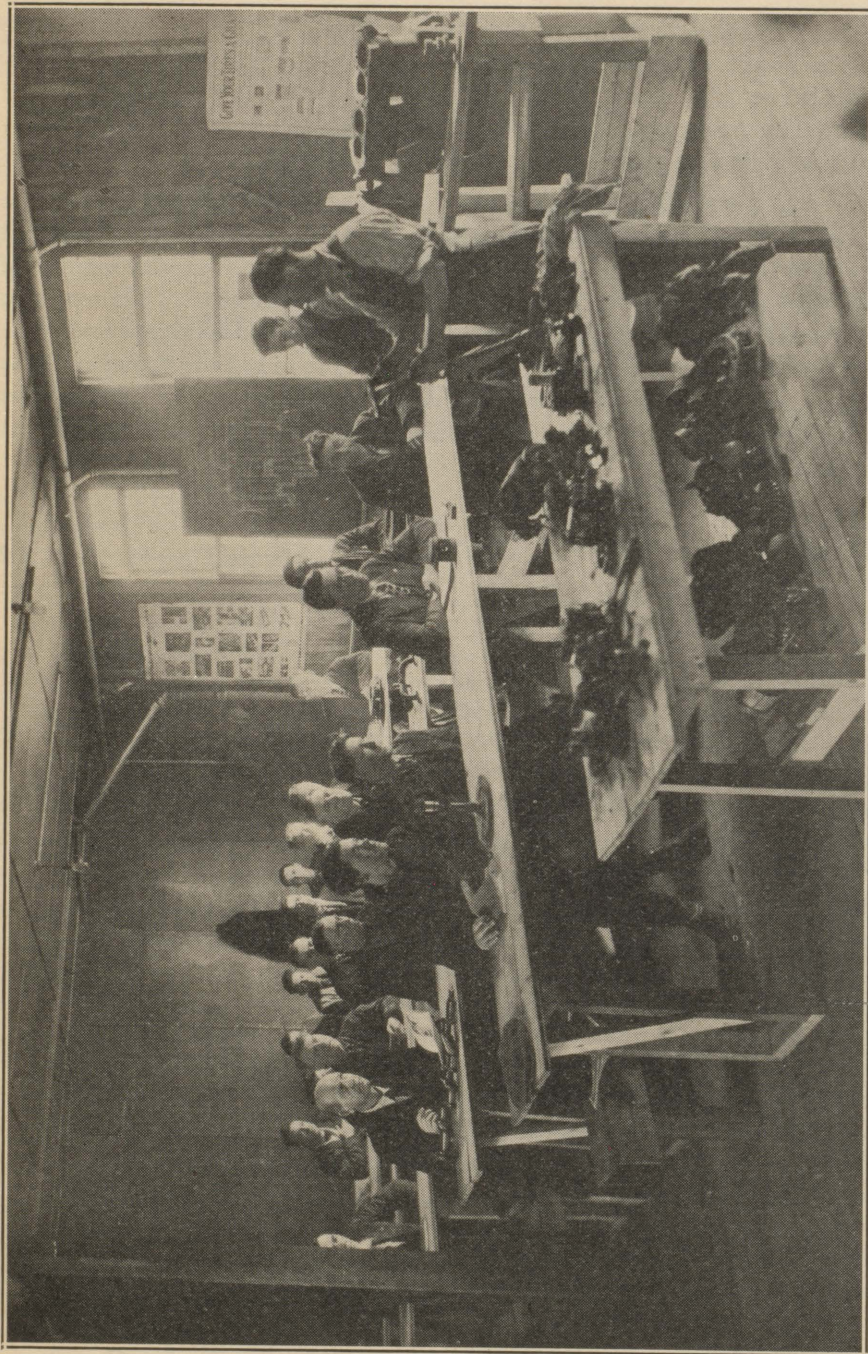
Hospital. A year later, however, the hospital staff was reduced and he was "laid off." After getting a certain amount of intermittent and casual employment, he was advised by friends to try Montreal. He arrived here last year and has been out of work for seven months. Having completely exhausted his little savings he was obliged to come to the Shelter. He likes Canada very much and feels that it is still the land of opportunity that he sought and he expects to stay and make his fortune as soon as normal times return. He attended the educational courses at the Shelter during the winter and says that he derived much benefit from them.

Concerning two men who were in the educational classes, Mr. Guiton writes as follows:—

"Early in the season, one of the teachers noticed that A. was always the first man 'on deck' at his classes, and also that he was apparently attending every class that was conducted. One of the members of the committee had a chat with the boy, and soon discovered that in spite of his dirty clothes and poor appearance, he was of more than average intelligence. He had been living at the Vitre Street Refuge for several weeks. Arrangements were made to have him moved to a more congenial place, and clothes were secured for him. He was transferred to the Extension Class, and given special instruction by one of the teachers. Today, through the efforts of the committee and one of his teachers, he is in a permanent position, acting as foreman in a manufacturing plant outside of the city. But there is another side altogether to the value of the classes. One older man expressed the feeling of very many when he said 'The classes have given us a chance to forget for a few hours each day that we are derelicts. The teachers have treated us like men, not like so many animals herded together. It has been the only place where we have been addressed as 'Mr.' instead of 'Here, you!' And the fact that we were learning something . . . anything . . . sort of put a new hope in one'."

The Superintendent every day has brought to him lost articles which men have found lying about in the Shelter. These are usually of little value but nevertheless could be sold for something to the secondhand dealers on Craig Street, were the penniless finders not possessed of a real spirit of honesty. On one occasion he had handed to him an old and much worn spectacle case containing a pair of old fashioned gold mounted spectacles, and the finder expressed real concern lest the owner having lost them might be put to serious inconvenience and perhaps be unable to read.

But in some cases, being recognized as a man of good judgment and wide experience in life, the Superintendent is called upon for advice and assistance of a much more confidential and intimate nature. The constable has confided that he has been married for a number of years but has no children. He has asked the Superintendent to get a baby for him. The Superintendent rises to the occasion, he cancels an important engagement and accepts the constable's invitation to go home to dinner with him and talk the matter over with his wife.



A Class in Automotive Engineering

After a thorough discussion of the whole question, the Superintendent accepts the task and undertakes to find a healthy and really lovely baby boy. This he does before long. The constable and his wife are a most admirable and worthy pair. That baby may not have been born with a silver spoon in his mouth, but was certainly born under a lucky star to be adopted by them.

This little section on the "humanities" may perhaps best be closed with a letter which was left at the Shelter by a young Englishman who was going back to his home in the old country, as it expresses in his own words his estimate of the value of the Shelter to the better class of unemployed men. While returning to England, naturally disappointed that the hopes with which he came to Canada have not been realized, coming to the Shelter he has passed the winter not only in a decent but actually in a profitable manner and he leaves Canada with that feeling of cordiality and friendship which serves to strengthen our bonds with the Motherland.

Montreal, March 18th, 1932

To Whom it may Concern,
Vitre Street Recreation Rooms.

Dear Sirs:—

I am leaving Montreal for my home in London, England; have been in Montreal for the past six weeks and before I leave would like to show my appreciation of the Recreation Rooms that are available to us unemployed at Vitre Street.

We are able to come into these rooms and have available a most modern library of up-to-date books and fictitious (sic) magazines, the daily papers in English and French at all times, which one is able to read unhampered by the weather hazards. Also writing materials are available and letters are mailed free for us to all parts of the Globe. What a relief to be able to write home in times like these and ease their heartaches!

For a person wishing to continue his studies, daily classes are available in the following subjects:—Shorthand, Bookkeeping, Arithmetic, English, French, Engineering; so a person need not forget his time devoted to studies in the past.

I am writing this of my own free will, and I wish the best to all who undertake to help us in these Recreation Rooms in our present plight, caused through no fault of our own.

Yours fraternally,

RONALD GOODWILL

Organization and Administration

The personnel of the Committee of Management has been given above. The smooth and successful running of the Shelter throughout the winter was due very largely to the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of the Shelter and to the Chairmen of the Committees, all of whom were admirably qualified for the work which they respectively undertook and all of whom carried it out in a most efficient manner. Mr. A. Stanley Rough, the Superintendent of the Shelter, was a member of the staff of the Parks and Playgrounds Association and was freed from his duties in connection with this body, to take up the Superintendency of the Shelter for the winter. He possessed a wide experience in dealing with the class of men which thronged to the Shelter and had in an exceptional degree the personal characteristics required for work of this kind.

The Chairmen of the Committees were all voluntary workers and each had complete control of the work belonging to his Committee—as a matter of fact he was the Committee, there being no other members. Mr. Coulson, the Chairman of the House Committee had charge of Building and dealt with all questions of upkeep, alterations and repairs. The United Church of Canada had made itself responsible for the provision of a library and the upkeep of the reading rooms and the Rev. Dr. Gifford, as Chairman of the Library Committee, took charge of this work with the aid of Mr. A. P. L. Larsen, B.D., B.L.S., as Librarian. The Church of England in a similar manner undertook to provide the funds for the Educational Work carried on in the Shelter and this was accordingly placed in charge of the Rev. Mr. Guiton of Christ Church Cathedral, as Chairman of the Educational Committee, who gave much of his time to this work, which was carried out in a most efficient manner. Mr. W. F. S. Shepherd, the Chairman of the Entertainment Committee, had charge of the Theatre and of all entertainments arranged in connection with the Shelter, and was most successful in enlisting the co-operation of the men, drawing entertainers from among them and arranging for a most interesting series of performances extending over the entire winter.

In order that there should always be someone in authority in every room throughout the Shelter, thirty men were picked out from the unemployed coming to the Shelter, who were judged by the Superintendent to be men in whom confidence might be placed, and one of these was put in charge of each room. These were the men who gave out the cards, checkers or dominoes. They were designated as belonging to the staff of the Shelter by wearing grey jerseys of a peculiar pattern. Some of them can be seen standing in the passages or against the wall in certain of the accompanying photographs. These men proved to be most efficient, they became friends of the men in the Shelter, yet saw to it that the rules of the Shelter were observed. They slept together in a large, airy and comfortable room provided for them, but obtained their meals elsewhere. Every morning before the opening hours, these men swept out the Shelter and set it in order for the day.

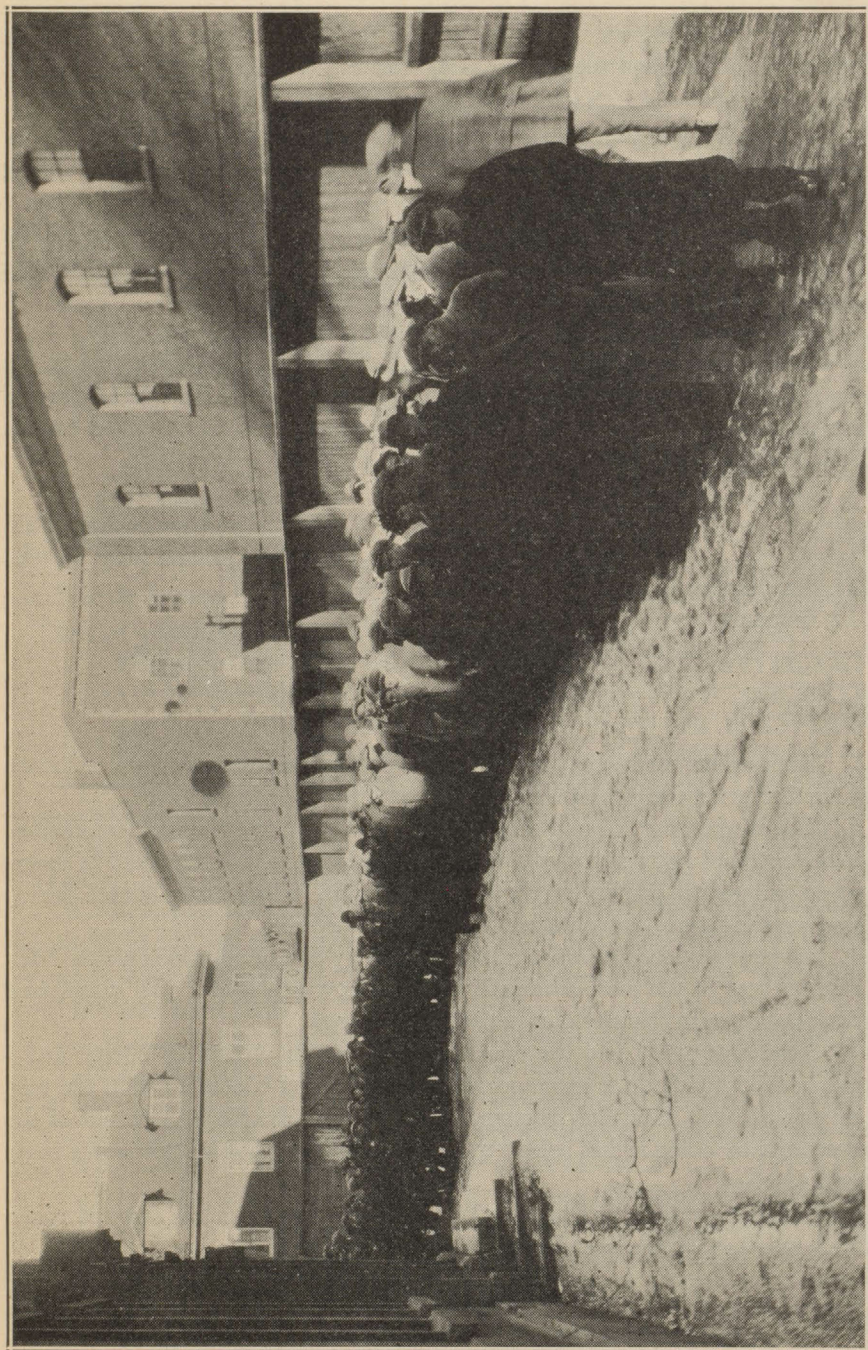
Behavior and Order

Everyone visiting the Shelter was surprised, as the Committee itself has been, with the excellent behavior of the men. In the rooms set aside for cards and checkers, there is sound of men entering or leaving the room and a subdued hum of conversation but no loud talking or jostling. In the reading rooms absolute quiet has prevailed, and this without any effort on the part of the management. For the first ten weeks no police were in the building. Later on a man occasionally came in bringing with him a bottle of "rubbing alcohol" which he had succeeded in procuring somewhere, and getting away in some corner proceeded to drink it and treat his friends. In certain cases this was not discovered until one or other of the party fell to the floor to all appearances dead. It proved insufficient to merely put these men out of the Shelter. A constable had to be secured and two or three of them "sent down" for a month before the nuisance was stopped. After this the Committee arranged with the Chief of Police to have a constable always somewhere in the building and with him came the majesty of the law. He seldom had anything to do but be in evidence, the men liked him and he occasionally joined them in a game of cards or baseball. He usually spent at least a portion of the afternoon in the theatre, where very occasionally some humorously disposed member of the community undertook to attempt to disconcert some inexperienced performer by "booing" at him from the darkness beyond the footlights. In such cases the representative of the law, with the full approval of public opinion, escorted him to the door and further informed him that for the remainder of the season he would not be re-admitted. The only case where there was anything that could be called a disturbance was in the early fall when the Shelter was first opened. At that time the men were not admitted until 10 a.m., and on two occasions the crowd of men who had gathered outside attempted to force the door and get in earlier. In one case they succeeded in doing so and the police were called in and cleared the building. Ten o'clock had been fixed as the hour of opening because with the limited staff at its disposal the Committee could not arrange to get the building cleaned up earlier. It was recognized, however, that the men's demand was a reasonable one, the necessary readjustments were made and during the remainder of the winter the Shelter was opened at 8.15 a.m., which has proved to be quite satisfactory to all concerned.

Services Rendered to the Community

This social experiment, carried out in Montreal during the winter of 1931-1932, achieved the following results:—

1. It kept between 4000 and 5000 destitute men off the streets all winter, provided them with a warm place where they could sit down and amuse themselves, and if they desired to do so, learn something useful.



Entering the Shelter

2. It made these men, who through no fault of their own were unable to obtain work, feel that they were being decently treated by the community. They were contented instead of being angry and resentful.

3. It had a marked influence in promoting sobriety among the men. They had no liquor and were to all appearances quite happy without it. Mentioning to one of the men one day that it might possibly be necessary to close the Shelter through lack of funds, he said quite frankly, "Well, it's up to you; if the Shelter is closed and we are put out into the street, we shall certainly go and beg some money, buy beer and get drunk."

4. It greatly reduced vagrancy and crime in the city, as shown by the following letters. The first is from the Chief of Police of the City of Montreal and the two following from the City Recorders. These letters speak for themselves and give more authoritative testimony than any which could be supplied by the Committee of the Shelter.

Police Department, City Hall,
Montreal, February 26, 1932

Mr. Wm. Bowie,
Secretary,
Day Shelter for Unemployed Men,
City.

Dear Sir:—

Enclosed herewith you will find a comparative statement of the arrests made by the Officers of this department in 1930 and 1931.

The loiterers are arrested only after 9 o'clock p.m., and if there is an increase in the arrests of loiterers it is partly due to the increase in the number of unemployed and greater activity on the part of our men. Beggars are arrested during day time and figures show a decrease in their arrests.

There is no doubt in my mind that your Day Shelter for Unemployed Men had been one of the most successful enterprises, which helped and encouraged the unemployed in this city during the winter season.

Some time ago, I had the opportunity of visiting your Day Shelter and I have noticed hundreds of men apparently satisfied and contented with the way they are treated. Your Day Shelter has kept those unemployed men out of the streets and by doing so has helped to a great extent our police department in its work.

I wish to re-affirm my good will to co-operate with you in any enterprise which would be beneficial to the unemployed men of this city.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) FERNAND DUFRESNE,
Director—Police Department

Recorder's Chambers,
Montreal, 29th February, 1932

William Bowie, Esq.,
Secretary, Day Shelter,
Montreal.

Dear Mr. Bowie,

Replying to your letter of the 22nd inst., I have to state that the delay in acknowledging it was caused by inquiries made in pursuance thereof.

That the quite appreciable decrease in arrests for vagrancy and loitering could be directly traced to the operation of your relief station, is the conclusion I have come to as a result of my investigation.

Faithfully,

(Signed) G. H. SEMPLE

Recorder's Chambers,
Montreal, 9th March, 1932

Mr. William Bowie,
Secretary, Day Shelter for Unemployed Men,
Vitre and Chenneville Streets,
Montreal.

Dear Mr. Bowie,

I must beg your pardon for not answering your letter sooner. The amount of our work is responsible for the delay.

I am since the beginning of your institution "au courant" of what you have done and of what you do to soothe the grief of the unemployed.

Without being able to estimate the number of persons who would be before this court on charges of vagrancy and loitering if your institution was not in operation, I am positive that your part in preventing people from committing these offences is immense.

Many, many persons appearing before our court on one of these charges are not criminals, but only uneducated, indifferent people, who do not care about what they do or what they say, or people who, having no places to go, remain on the streets loitering and begging. And then begins for you and for us the difficult part of our duty; to separate tares from the wheat.

But you have chosen your way and it is a magnificent one. If my wishes and congratulations are of any help to you and to your brother workers, you can rest assured that they are yours.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. A. THOUIN,
Recorder of Montreal

Criticisms

The work carried on at the Shelter has met with wide-spread and general approval.

So far as can be ascertained only three criticisms of it have been made in any quarter.

The first of these is that the Shelter housed some men who were not willing to work. There was no ground for this criticism last winter for the simple reason that there was no work to be had. The few occasional jobs that were offered, went to the unemployed married men and these are cared for by other agencies. While there were undoubtedly some men who belonged to that class who prefer to loaf rather than to work—a class which unfortunately is found in every rank of society—and others who were old, ailing or more or less disabled, the officers of the Shelter who came to know many hundreds of the men rather intimately, found that the great majority of them at least were keen and eager to secure work of any kind.

The second criticism is that the men in the Shelter were unduly pampered and provided with luxuries to which they were totally unaccustomed. In reply to this, it may be said that if a warm room and the soft side of a board to sit on are undue luxuries, this criticism is certainly justified, but it is to be hoped for the credit of Canada that these luxuries at least are ordinarily possessed by every citizen of the Dominion.

The third objection is that a great body of unemployed men such as that brought together in the Shelter, provided an admirable opportunity for communistic propaganda. It is a fact well known to the Committee that throughout the winter occasional "Reds" visited the Shelter and engaged in covert attempts to spread their revolutionary views. The work was carried on stealthily and chiefly by means of occasional circulars left on the tables in the various rooms. These were single sheets printed or stencilled on one side in English and on the other side in French. The printing was very poor and the English execrable. They were short and filled with untrue and abusive statements directed against society in general and against certain institutions where the men ate and slept in particular. They concluded by calling upon the men to "organize," to attend meetings to be held in certain places or definitely to join the Soviet Union. This propaganda produced but little effect on the men. The secret service men of the detective department of the city as well as those of certain of the large companies in the city repeatedly went through the Shelter and mixed with the men and they invariably reported that the conditions which they found were quite satisfactory. The fact of the matter is that these Soviet Emissaries find it much easier to spread their views among men who are being hustled about the streets, badly treated and consequently vindictive, than among those who are being well treated and contented.

In one of the questionnaires filled in by men in the Shelter for the Survey which is being carried on by Professor Marsh of McGill University, to which reference has already been made, one of the men, J.M., wrote as follows concerning the Shelter—"A very needful institution at a time like this. I and others have been approached to join the Communist Party and we feel that without something of this sort to cheer up the men and keep them busy it would be less easy to laugh off such suggestions."

The Shelter was indeed a great antidote to communistic propaganda, for it represented one of the most practical, direct and efficient steps which our "capitalistic" society can take to defeat such propaganda, namely that of ameliorating so far as possible those harsh and evil features of our present society, until we can get rid of them altogether, of which features these continuously recurrent periods of unemployment are among the worst and most dangerous.

THE DAY SHELTER FOR
UNEMPLOYED MEN
MONTREAL

REPORT OF ITS OPERATIONS
FOR THE SECOND YEAR—
WINTER OF 1932-33



FRANK DAWSON ADAMS
MCGILL UNIVERSITY

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BY
FRANK DAWSON ADAMS

The Day Shelter for Unemployed Men Montreal

REPORT OF ITS OPERATIONS FOR THE SECOND YEAR—
WINTER OF 1932-33

By

FRANK DAWSON ADAMS



Introduction

The origin of the Shelter and the work carried on in it during the first year in which it was operated has already been described in a pamphlet entitled "The Day Shelter for Unemployed Men in Montreal—A Social Experiment" which was issued in the month of May, 1932.

The Day Shelter in Montreal as there described was a social experiment somewhat different from any that had been tried elsewhere, one which, most unexpectedly, attracted widespread attention—enquiries concerning the work and requests for copies of the pamphlet in question having been received during the past year from no less than 69 different societies and welfare organizations engaged in unemployment work in sixteen States of the neighbouring Union and in five of the Provinces of the Dominion of Canada.

It is not necessary here to repeat what has already been written concerning the character of the Shelter and the work carried on within it during the first year of its existence, but for those who have not seen the pamphlet above mentioned a very brief resume of this may be given. Ample provision is made in Montreal at a number of different institutions for providing unemployed single men with food and beds. The Day Shelter for Unemployed Men gives neither food nor sleeping accommodation but provides a place where several thousand men, who would otherwise be wandering about the streets and almost certainly getting

into mischief, can throughout the winter season find a warm place in which to spend the day and one where they will find opportunities for both recreation and education. The building in which the work of the Day Shelter is carried on was formerly the old St. Laurent School. It is very large, occupying four sides of a whole city block situated in a poor part of the business section of the city. It is from two to four stories in height and encloses a large vacant space formerly used as the school playground. The property belongs to the Montreal Tramways Company and was placed at the disposal of the Committee through the kindly interest of K. B. Thornton, Esq., the General Manager of the Company.

It was found that the portion of the building occupying three sides of the square was sufficiently large to meet the needs of the Shelter and from this the partitions were removed and a series of very large rooms were thus secured. All of these rooms were provided with rough tables and benches, made by the men themselves. The rooms on the ground floor were arranged for games of various kinds, more particularly cards and checkers. Those on the second floor were set apart as libraries and reading rooms—or else were divided into class rooms for educational purposes. The third floor of one side of the building was equipped as a Concert Hall and Theatre and provided with the necessary dressing rooms behind the stage.

Throughout the six months of the fall, winter and spring of 1931-2, during which the Shelter was open, all of this accommodation was fully and continuously occupied. The men came to regard the Shelter as their "club," excellent relations were established between the men and the staff and no difficulty was experienced in maintaining excellent order at all times.

It should here be made clear that there are on Vitre Street, and situated about half a mile from one another, two separate institutions in which provision is made for the accommodation of unemployed single men.

The first is the "Refuge" conducted by the Montreal Relief Committee and situated at number 756 Vitre Street. In this the men are provided with meals and in an adjacent building on Inspector Street they are supplied with beds.

The second is the "Day Shelter," of which this is the second annual report, located at 163 Vitre Street, operated by another Committee under the Council of Social Agencies, in which no meals or beds are given but which is arranged for the accommodation of men during the day time, and where, as has been stated, they have a well warmed building in which they can stay and in which they can find amusement, recreation and instruction, as well as provision for repairing their boots and clothes and for securing medical advice and attention.

The Operation of the Shelter in the winter of 1932-33

The Shelter was opened on October 24, 1932, and was closed on May 6, 1933.

The following gentlemen constituted the Executive Committee:

Dr. Frank D. Adams, Chairman; George S. Mooney, Vice-Chairman; William Bowie, Secretary; A. Stanley Rough, Superintendent; Allan Macduff, Treasurer. Chairmen of Committees: *Education*, Rev. B. Thorpe; *Entertainment*, Edgar Murphy; *Foreign*, D. J. Van Bommel; *House*, C. H. Colson; *Library*, Rev. W. A. Gifford; *Boot and Shoe Repairing*, C. R. Bronsden (Lion's Club). Other members of the Executive Committee—Alderman W. N. Biggar, L. E. Brittle, Alderman G. R. Brunet, Kenneth Cook, Father Joseph Fallon, Alderman A. Filion, Wm. E. Findlay, Alderman A. E. Goyette, Dr. A. S. Lamb, Professor L. C. Marsh, A. W. McMaster, Dr. Frank G. Pedley, Carl Ruckman, Rabbi Harry T. Stern.

The smooth and successful operation of the Shelter throughout the winter was due to the continuous and individual attention given to the work by the chairmen of the several committees, as well as by the Secretary and Treasurer. In addition to the work of these gentlemen especial mention should be made of the valuable services rendered by Mr. A. W. McMaster, in securing from large commercial corporations in the city many valuable gifts in kind for the use of the Shelter. Mr. A. Stanley Rough was again this year freed from his duties in connection with Parks and Playgrounds Association in order that he might take up the duties of Superintendent of the Day Shelter. He rendered invaluable service throughout the year in this capacity. Mr. T. Morley Ewing did much valuable work in assisting Professor Marsh in securing data for his Survey, and also in connection with the conduct of the theatre.

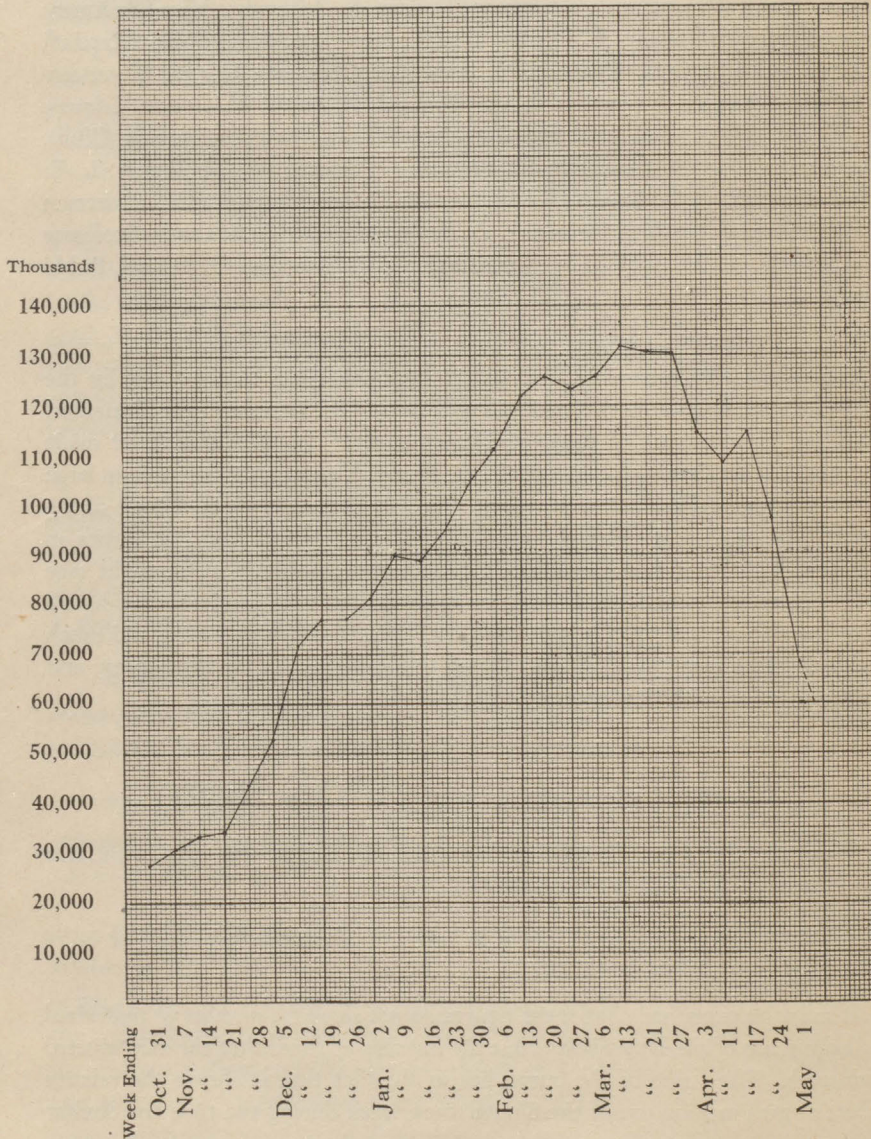
Number of Men Using the Day Shelter

Every day through the period during which the Shelter was open count was kept of the number of men entering the building.

If the number entering each week is taken and plotted, the following curve for the season of 1932-33 is obtained.

It must be explained that these figures *do not show the number of individual men making use of the Day Shelter, but the number of times that the men entered it each week*. The value of the curve lies in the fact that it shows the *relative numbers* of men making use of the Shelter each week during the time the Shelter was open.

Curve showing the number of men entering The Day Shelter for Unemployed Men each week during the winter of 1932-33



It will be noted that the number starting with 27,838 for the first week of Oct. 24 to Oct. 31 rose rapidly as the winter wore on, reaching a maximum of 132,033 in the week of March 7 to March 13, after which it declined to 68,510 in the last week, namely April 24 to May 1. After May 1 it declined still further as the Shelter closed on May 5.

The actual number of individual men who used the Shelter could only be determined by installing a system of registration and admission by cards to be presented each time the men entered. This would be cumbersome, and expensive to operate, and the result obtained would not, it was considered, warrant the outlay, more especially as it was the aim of the Committee to make access to the Shelter on the part of the men as free from restriction as possible, consistent with efficient operation. It is impossible to make any close estimate of this number since several unknown factors are involved.

The number of individual men who received relief at the Montreal Relief Committee Refuge in March, when the attendance both at this Refuge and at the Day Shelter was at its maximum for the winter, was 8,012. All the men who were given meals and beds at the Refuge came to the Day Shelter during the day time. In addition to these many came from other institutions in the city, of which there are a large number, as well as some who had rooms elsewhere. It seems certain that at least 10,000 individual men used the Shelter during the winter, while the number may have risen as high as 14,000.

Nationalities of the Men using the Day Shelter

The men using the Shelter may be arranged, as to race, in three classes—French Canadians, English speaking men and Foreigners from various European countries. A detailed registration of the nationalities was not kept at the Day Shelter but the table given below, showing the number of men who registered at the Montreal Relief Committee's Refuge during March when the attendance was larger than in any other month during the present winter, has a direct bearing on this question since, as has been mentioned, these men constitute a large proportion of those who come to the Day Shelter. For these figures the writer is indebted to Mr. Frank R. Clarke.

Montreal Relief Committee Nationality Figures

Number of persons who received relief during the
month of March, 1933

Nationalities

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------|-------|------------------------|
| French Canadians | 3,134 | | 39.11 p.c. |
| English Canadians | 891 | 11.12 | } 20.47 p.c. |
| Great Britain | 749 | 9.35 | |
| U.S.A. | 49 | | |
| Germany | 27 | | |
| Poland | 327 | | |
| Roumania | 95 | | |
| Finland | 428 | | |
| Hungary | 533 | | |
| Czecko-Slovakia | 677 | | |
| France | 27 | | |
| Denmark | 26 | | |
| Sweden | 52 | | |
| Holland | 2 | | |
| Jugo-Slavia | 230 | | |
| Ukrania | 397 | | |
| Lithuania | 45 | | |
| Russia | 86 | | |
| Norway | 31 | 3189 | 40.41 p.c. |
| Bulgaria | 18 | | |
| Austria | 12 | | |
| Switzerland | 20 | | |
| Esthonia | 4 | | |
| Belgium | 16 | | |
| Spain | 6 | | |
| Latvia | 1 | | |
| Syria | 1 | | |
| Japan | 2 | | |
| China | 16 | | |
| Italy | 102 | | |
| Greece | 6 | | |
| Armenia | 1 | | |
| Turkey | 1 | | |
| | 8,012 | | 99.99 p.c. |



The Day Shelter—Men Waiting to Enter the Theatre

It is interesting to note the change which has taken place in the relative percentages of the three classes of men mentioned above this winter as compared with last winter. These are set forth in the following table:

| | 1931-32 | | 1932-33 |
|-----------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| French Canadians | 35.93 p.c. | | 39.11 p.c. |
| English Canadians | 18.30 p.c. | } 34.02 p.c. | 11.12 p.c. |
| Great Britain | 15.72 p.c. | | 9.35 p.c. |
| Foreigners | 30.04 p.c. | | 40.41 p.c. |
| | | | } 20.47 p.c. |

As will be seen the percentage of French Canadians has increased somewhat, accompanied by a large increase in the percentage of Foreigners, while the percentage of English speaking men has fallen to approximately one-half of what it was last year, the decrease being about equally divided between English Canadians and men from Great Britain.

As will be noted the percentages for the past winter of 1932-33 agree closely with those of the men entering the Day Shelter last fall given in the Survey of Prof. Marsh.

*Census taken by Professor Marsh of the men who registered
for admission to the Day Shelter at the time of its opening
in October, 1932.*

An important feature of the work of the present year was a census of the men who registered for entrance at the opening of the Shelter in October. This was taken by Prof. Leonard C. Marsh, F.S.S., of McGill University, assisted by Mr. T. Morley Ewing, as part of a comprehensive study of the unemployment situation in Canada in which he is now engaged under a grant from the Rockefeller Institution.

The writer is indebted to Professor Marsh for the accompanying figures and for advice with reference to their interpretation. The results of this survey will be examined in greater detail by Professor Marsh in relation to other statistics bearing on unemployed groups in the city, and the results of this study will appear at a later date.

In the winter of 1931-32 the men coming to the Shelter manifested a distinct aversion to filling in any forms asking for information concerning them. There was a general distrust with reference to the use to which such information might be put and they felt that a policy of "Safety first" was the better one for them to follow. It was evident, however, this Fall that a feeling of confidence had been



An Educational Class

established and when it was announced about a week before the opening of the Day Shelter, which took place on October 24, 1932, that men desiring the use of the Shelter might, if they desired, register in advance, 3,350 men presented themselves for registration and were duly enrolled, answering freely all of the thirty questions asked by Prof. Marsh and his assistants. Other men who came later were registered subsequently during the latter part of October and the early part of November, the total number of men making returns for the purpose of the Census reaching about 4,000. As these men represented a large proportion of the total number of men who attended the Shelter during the first half of the winter the results of the Census may be taken as presenting a true picture of certain factors at least in the unemployment situation in Montreal during this time, so far as unemployed single men were concerned—omitting the “white collar class” (clerks, etc.) who did not come to the Shelter but were registered elsewhere.

During the latter half of the winter the number of men coming to the Shelter increased rapidly, as has been already mentioned.

The questions asked in Prof. Marsh’s Census which are of importance as bearing upon that phase of the unemployment situation represented in the Day Shelter—with their answers—are given below. These figures are concerned only with the 3,350 men who registered before the Shelter opened.

I. *Where were the men born and what is their Nationality?*

The Census answers the question as follows:—

| | |
|--|------|
| French Canadians | 45% |
| English Canadians | 10% |
| British (born in Great Britain) | 10% |
| Foreigners (Slavs and other Eastern Europeans) | 35% |
| | 100% |

As compared with the figures for last year (winter of 1931-32) this shows a considerable increase in the numbers of French Canadians and of foreigners and a large decrease in the number of English speaking men—both of English Canadians and of men born in Great Britain.

II. *What is the age distribution of the men who come to the Shelter?*

| | |
|---------------------------------|------|
| Younger than 25 years | 8% |
| Between 25 and 40 | 42% |
| Between 40 and 50 | 24% |
| Over 50 years old | 26% |
| | 100% |

These figures show that the number of very young men coming to the Shelter is small. Half of the men are of the age (i.e., up to 40 years) when the man who works with his hands is at his highest efficiency. One quarter of these are rather past their most productive age (i.e., 40 to 50 years old). Another quarter are getting toward, or have already reached, the age when their services are no longer sought even in good times (i.e., over 50 years of age).

III. *How many of these are single men?*

75 per cent returned themselves as single men. Some of these, however, are persons with wives and families in other countries.

IV. *How many of these men are skilled and how many unskilled workers?*

| | |
|--|------|
| Highly skilled men (artisans including 2% of the "white collar class") | 16% |
| Semi skilled men | 16% |
| Unskilled men | 68% |
| | 100% |

The largest single element amongst the lowest class of these unskilled men—the "pick and shovel men"—are foreigners of Slavonic origin.

V. *In what occupations were these men engaged before they were thrown out of work?*

| | |
|---|-----|
| Manufacturing ($\frac{1}{2}$ in iron and steel plants) | 11% |
| Building and construction | 25% |
| Agriculture | 20% |
| Ordinary labourers | 30% |
| Lumbering | 3% |
| Domestic and personal service | 6% |
| | 95% |

One of the important facts to be drawn from this table is that there are a large number of men in the Day Shelter who will be unemployed every winter. These include all the agricultural workers (hired on farms around Montreal during the summer) and say one-third of the men engaged in building and construction and the same proportion of the ordinary labourers, for except in "boom times" building construction is always slowed down in winter time, and also the port of Montreal is closed.

On this basis it will be seen that 38% of the men who used the Shelter during the first half of the year, that is to say some 1,900 of these men, will be unemployed every winter.

VI. *What are (or were) the occupations of the fathers of these men?*

| | |
|--|------|
| Farmers | 45% |
| Building and construction | 10% |
| Artisans and service occupations | 35% |
| Labourers | 10% |
| | 100% |

That is to say, about one half of these men now in the Shelter left farms in Canada or in some other country to take up their residence in the city of Montreal—the other half are sons of city residents.

VII. *How many of these men are able to give any city address?*

| | |
|--|------|
| Those who have a private address | 40% |
| Those living at the Vitre Street Refuge, the Meurling Refuge or at some other similar institution and who have no city address | 50% |
| Those from whom no replies were received | 10% |
| | 100% |

This shows that nearly one-half the men who spend their day at the Day Shelter have a room somewhere in the city in which they sleep, or friends in the city to whose care their letters may be addressed. It also shows that practically all the men who sleep at the refuges spend their days in the Day Shelter, while it has already been seen that most of the men at least, who come to the Shelter get their meals at the Refuge.

VIII. *How long have these men been in Canada?*

The returns show that nearly one-half of these men have been in Canada 25 years or more. These are French Canadians and English Canadians for the most part. Of the other half, 15% (of the total) have been in Canada less than five years while the number who have been in Canada less than two years is negligible. The foreign contingent in the Shelter, therefore, does not consist of newly arrived immigrants.



First Aid

IX. *How much "Steady Work" have these men had during the last four years?*

| | |
|---|------|
| 25 months or more | 20% |
| 13 to 24 months | 11% |
| 4 to 12 months | 36% |
| No steady employment (or less than three months in the last four years) | 33% |
| | 100% |

X. *What was the character of such "Temporary Work" as was received by these men?*

| | |
|---|------|
| Farming, Lumbering, Mining, etc. | 18% |
| Constructional Work and Service Occupations | 11% |
| "General Labour" | 60% |
| Other Work | 11% |
| | 100% |

XI. *Where had the men gone in search for work?*

| | |
|---|------|
| Those who had not gone in search for work beyond the bounds of Greater Montreal | 55% |
| Those who had gone to various localities within the Province of Quebec but not outside the Province | 10% |
| Those who had searched for work outside the Province of Quebec | 20% |
| Those who did not answer the question in sufficient detail to be properly classed | 15% |
| | 100% |

The Census unfortunately does not show how many men in the Day Shelter came to Montreal from points outside of the Province of Quebec. The returns under Question XI however show that this was probably much less than 20%.

Recreation in the Shelter

The various forms of recreation provided for the men at the Shelter were necessarily in the main the same as those of last year. Cards and checkers were played continuously, bridge and cribbage were the favourite games of cards. The men were encouraged to arrange competitions in these and other games. A bridge tournament was held in which sixteen pairs competed playing 225 games, also cribbage and checkers competitions in which 120 and 190 men respectively were engaged. Shortly after the opening of the Shelter this year a number of the men asked that they might be provided with chess sets, which was done and about 50 men played chess daily during the rest of the season. There

was also a chess tournament in which 40 competitors played 1,600 games. Dominoes was also a favourite game. Early in the winter the Picture Puzzle fever invaded the Shelter and about 700 men were engaged in this diversion every day until the Shelter closed.

The Committee received as gifts, from various persons and societies interested in the Shelter, 2,800 packs of cards and 2,000 picture puzzles which enabled it to provide for these activities. About 500 packs of cards were used up every month. 400 gramophone records were also donated.

Early in April, as soon as the snow melted away and the playground dried up, the men were provided with the necessary equipment and the playing of baseball and quoits commenced, every foot of the ground being occupied by "teams," while an intensely interested and admiring audience occupied all the available space around the field.

The Theatre was one of the most popular sources of amusement. A performance was given every afternoon, except Saturday, from 2 till 3.30. To prevent overcrowding, the admission this year was limited to 640 persons at each performance. There was a small staff of five who organized, who arranged and took part in the entertainments, but the performers were in the main drawn from the men themselves, among whom were many good singers and dancers. From time to time outsiders from various choirs in the city volunteered their aid and occasionally jugglers, "strong men" and "artists" possessed of strange and varied attainments or abilities would happen in and offer their services for the entertainment of the unemployed men.

It was interesting to note that nothing "broad" was ever tolerated; this theatre, run by the men themselves, maintaining at least as high a level of "respectability" as any other in town, while the audience nevertheless was enthusiastic to the last degree. A new feature was introduced this year in the form of competitions between men from the audience who felt that they had some latent histrionic abilities. The audience itself acted as the judge in these, often most interesting performances, and awarded the prizes by the intensity of its applause. It might be observed that the prizes in these as in all the other competitions held in the "Shelter" were in the form of good sized standard packages of excellent tobacco, which the Committee procured at the not exorbitant price of two cents a package.

When little plays or "sketches" were given the men rehearsed in the morning, while the performances were given in the afternoon. One two-act "sketch" written and arranged by the theatre staff and which bore the optimistic title of "Happy Days," was so successful on the boards of the Day Shelter Theatre, that it was, under the direction of Mr. Lee, the manager of the Shelter Theatre, presented twice during the winter at the Orpheum Theatre before a

public audience and crowded houses. Other performances were given at various institutions during the winter.

Educational Activities

The Committee from the opening of the Day Shelter has been desirous of securing the largest attendance possible at the Educational classes. The attention of the men was repeatedly directed to the fact that such classes were provided and they were urged to avail themselves of the opportunities offered to employ their enforced leisure in securing knowledge which would be of value to them.

Only a very small proportion of them however could be induced to avail themselves of these educational opportunities. Most of them were incapable or undesirous of putting forth the mental effort needed to follow even a simple course of study; nevertheless the men who entered the educational classes worked diligently and made substantial progress.

Classes were held daily in the following subjects:

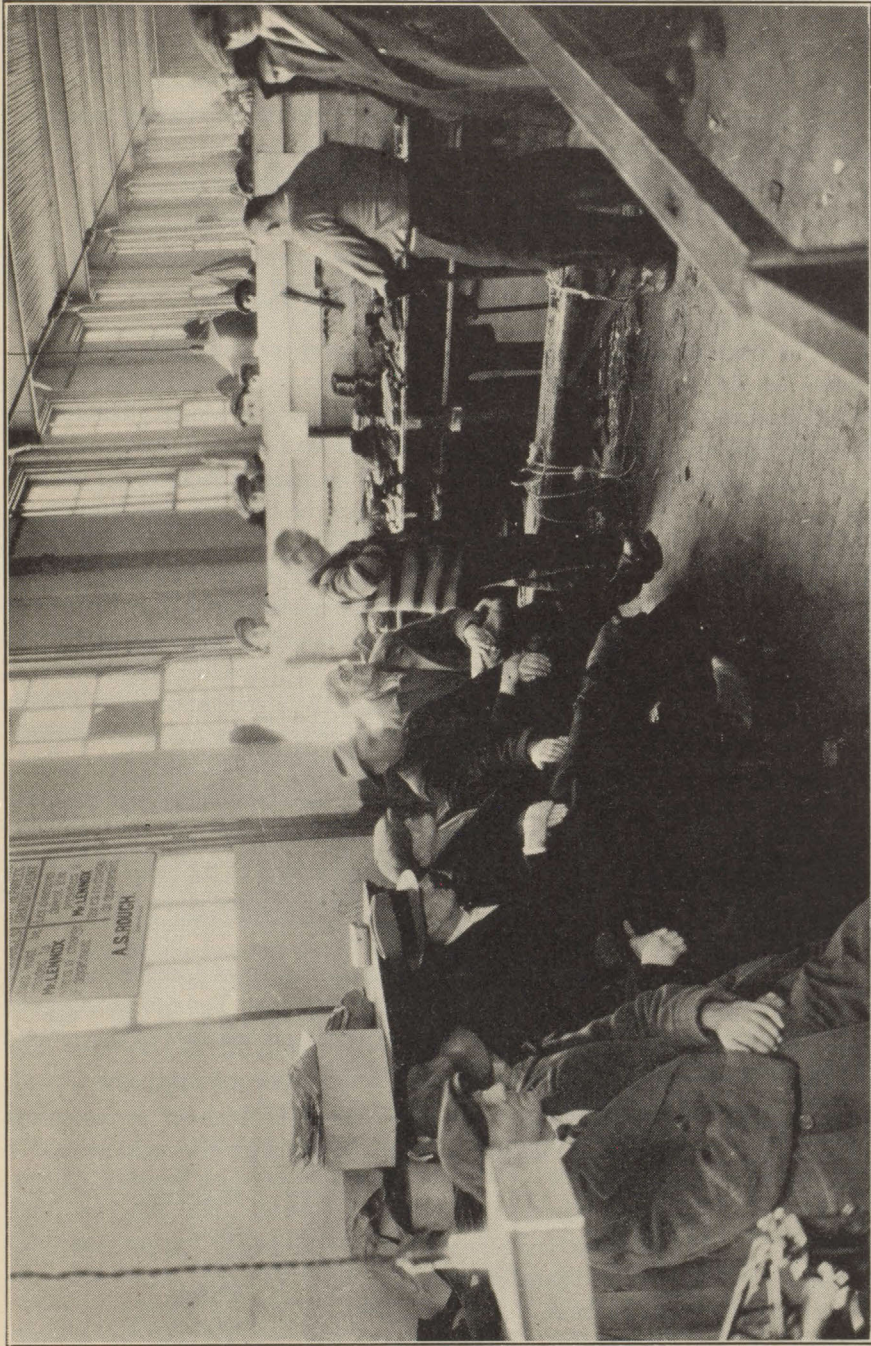
- French—Conversation and Writing.
- English—Conversation and Writing (elementary).
- English—Conversation and Writing (advanced).
- Arithmetic.
- Book-keeping.
- Mechanical Drawing.
- Show Card Writing.
- Mining and Geology (during part of the winter).
- First Aid.

There was a total enrollment of 769 men, the attendance for the whole season being 12,210.

The daily average was 84.7 men.

The instructors were thoroughly competent and the teaching was excellent.

One curious, unexpected, and at the same time suggestive incident, in connection with the educational work, was a request made on the part of a number of men for a course of lectures on mining. Some of the men were miners out of work, while others had become interested in the subject through conversation with these miners. Such a course was arranged, some of the lectures being given by one of the men themselves who had been a placer miner in British Columbia, while others were delivered by the Chairman, others by Dr. J. A. Dresser, the Directing Geologist to the Government of the Province of Quebec, and by Mr. J. A. Warburton, B.Sc. Fifty men attended the lectures and displayed a keen



The Shoe Repairing Department

interest in them and before the Shelter closed all the miners had left to look for work again in one or other of the mining areas of the Dominion.

A number of illustrated lectures dealing with various foreign countries were also given and were attended by large and appreciative audiences which seem to indicate the educational work along this line might be followed out with advantage should the Day Shelter be opened again next winter.

The Libraries and Reading Rooms

The two libraries with their reading rooms were important educational centres. In the former some 2,000 well selected books were on the shelves, while 19,400 magazines were given by various donors during the winter. The leading daily newspapers also each supplied the Shelter with several copies of their respective issues. The daily papers were placed on suitable racks in the reading rooms, while men drew books and magazines from the libraries, depositing with the librarians their admission cards, which were given back to them when the books or magazines were returned. The reading rooms were always crowded. The magazines were here, as everywhere else in the community, in greater demand than the books, although many of the men read books of real merit and often works quite recondite in character. The libraries contained for the most part works in the English language, although there was also a good selection of French books and magazines, as well as a smaller number of publications in Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Polish, Finnish, German, Spanish and Italian. The greater number of readers chose English works, a somewhat smaller number read literature in French, while only a few asked for works in the other languages.

In each library there were also special writing tables for the men. Paper and envelopes were provided and the letters when written were given to the Chief Librarian, by whom they were stamped and mailed.

Among these letters were those addressed to all parts of Canada. Of those sent to points outside of the Province of Quebec letters to Toronto and Ottawa were most numerous. Others were sent to friends and relatives in the United States and in the following countries of Europe:—

| | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|--|
| Great Britain | Switzerland | It is of interest to note that letters were also sent to:— |
| Ireland | Belgium | |
| Germany | Russia | Argentina |
| Austria | Yugo Slavia | India |
| Norway | Czecho Slavia | Siam |
| Sweden | Poland (large number) | China |
| Denmark | Roumania | Manchuria |
| Finland | Hungary | |
| | Spain | |

In the six and a half months during which the Day Shelter was open 10,475 letters were mailed. The postage for these amounted to \$336.45. The average amount of postage per letter being 3.21 cents.

New Ventures this Year

In addition to those activities which were carried on last year and which will always form prominent features in the work of the Day Shelter if it is continued in future years, three new and important features were introduced—namely:—

1. Boot Repairing Department.
2. Clothes Mending Department.
3. First Aid Department.

The Boot Repairing Department

At the opening of the Shelter this season fifty of the men were selected at random and their boots were examined. These were in most cases found to be in a bad, and in some cases, a shocking condition. This fact was brought to the attention of the Lions Club and this body, which has furthered so much philanthropic work in Montreal, undertook to equip and maintain a boot repairing department, the operation of this being placed in charge of the Superintendent of the Shelter. This department was opened on November 23rd and proved to be most successful.

The Committee was fortunate in securing the services of an experienced shoemaker who had had long experience in the kind of work required, having been Sergeant Cobbler in one of the regiments of the Canadian Expeditionary Force in the Great War. It was thought at first that he might be able to teach the men how to repair their own boots, but it was found that the great majority of them knew absolutely nothing about such work and giving the necessary instruction to even a small number of the men would engage the whole time of the cobbler. It was found to be much better, easier and more expeditious for him to undertake the major part of the repairs himself and then hand the boots to their owners for the final trimming and sandpapering. A great demand for the work at once arose and it was found that one man could not possibly cope with it. When, however, the work was well under way, four other cobblers who were among the unemployed men in the Shelter volunteered to give their services gratis to help on the good work, so that there were often five cobblers at one time engaged in this important department. No men were allowed to bring in boots for repairs, only those who came with their boots on their feet were attended to. On an average about 50 pairs of boots were repaired each day. During the time that the shoe repairing department was open, which was 163 days, 8,024 pairs of boots were repaired.

The Clothes Repairing Department

As the period of depression lengthens out the clothes even of men who were originally well dressed become threadbare and need to be patched or repaired. Last winter men were seen from time to time in the yard or some remote corner of the building endeavouring to effect such repairs under conditions of manifest difficulty.

A clothes repairing department was accordingly established this year in one of the long rooms where the cobblers were at work. An admirable tailor with one arm was found among the men resorting to the Shelter, and he was placed in charge of this work. A number of tables were provided, around which the men whose clothes needed repairing were seated. The tailor wielding a large pair of scissors controlled the whole situation. Great parcels of cloth samples, linings, boxes of buttons of all kinds, hanks of heavy thread of various colours, together with needles of all sizes, were donated by various wholesale firms in the city. The tailor inspected each garment requiring to be repaired, cut out the parts which needed to be renewed, selected new pieces to take their place, cut these to the requisite size and shape and set the owner to work sewing them on. Every man can sew, so that the repairs were completed by the men themselves, although in some cases not without a certain amount of concomitant profanity, especially when the added pieces refused to lie flat or puckered up under the amateur treatment to which they were subjected. All, however, was eventually brought to a satisfactory completion. In this department during the season no less than 16,129 garments were repaired and their owners made respectable members of the community.

The First Aid Department

The First Aid work which was inaugurated this winter proved to be of especial importance and met a great need. A small room in the educational department was set aside for this work which was put in charge of an experienced member of the St. John's Ambulance Corps, a machinist by trade who was out of work, and who with an assistant, discharged his duties admirably. All men who had sustained minor injuries or whose health seemed to be impaired were urged to avail themselves of the services of this department. A large number of men responded, about 200 presenting themselves for examination every week. All minor ailments were treated directly, and when the cases proved to be serious the men were sent to the Montreal General Hospital, where they were at once attended to. The Committee is desirous of acknowledging its indebtedness to this Hospital for the prompt attention received by all men sent to it from the Day Shelter. In a number of cases men were found to have some disease in its incipient stages and were directed what to do in order that a permanent cure might be effected.



Men Mending Their Clothes

During the winter no less than 5,473 men were examined and if necessary treated, and 128 were sent to the Montreal General or some other hospital.

Barber

As from time to time men had been seen in the Shelter having their hair cut by one of their friends, it had been intended to install a barber and provide proper facilities for his work. On further investigation however it was found that there was a "Barber's College" near the Day Shelter, this seat of learning having been established for the training of persons who desired to become barbers. This "College" being anxious to secure persons on whom its "students" might practise, sent a deputation to the Day Shelter asking for co-operation in its educational work. This was freely given by the Shelter and ample and continuous facilities were thus provided for the relief of all persons whose hair had grown too long. Further provision by the Shelter itself therefore seemed to be unnecessary.

Finances

As has already been stated the building used for the Day Shelter is owned by the Montreal Tramways Company and is by this Company placed at the disposal of the Day Shelter Committee free of charge, the Company also from time to time making certain minor repairs which are required to maintain the building in good condition. At the opening of the present season the equipment installed in the Fall of 1931 was ready for use again and only a small additional expenditure was required for extension or renewal. In the season of 1931-32 furthermore the decision to open a Day Shelter at all was not reached until early in October, and it was therefore necessary to equip and open the building with the least possible delay. Purchases also had to be made quickly and for immediate delivery.

During the past season of 1932-33, the Committee with more time at its disposal was able to buy more cheaply and also to secure many large donations in kind. Furthermore with a year of previous experience it was found possible to effect certain economies in administration. On the other hand, the installation and operation of the Boot and Shoe Repairing Department, the Clothes Repairing Department and the First Aid work, which were new and additional features this season, as well as the fact that the Shelter was kept open longer, entailed a considerable increase in expenditure. The work of the Committee was this season greatly facilitated by the fact that it received from the Emergency Relief Fund a much larger grant than last year, namely \$7,000 instead of \$2,000. While this amount was by no means sufficient to defray the whole cost of operating the Shelter, receiving it made it unnecessary for the Committee to collect so large an amount as last year by private subscription.

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

RECEIPTS

| | | |
|--|------------|--------------------|
| Grant Montreal Relief Committee | | \$7,000.00 |
| Montreal Parks and Playgrounds Association | | 1,240.80 |
| Donations: | | |
| Sundry | \$1,983.00 | |
| For Library (United Church) | 1,048.00 | |
| For Educational Work (Anglican Church) | 797.20 | |
| *For Shoe Repair Department (Lions Club) | 169.00 | |
| For Theatrical Department | 75.00 | 4,072.20 |
| | | <hr/> |
| Sale of Magazines | | 17.00 |
| | | <u>\$12,330.00</u> |

DISBURSEMENTS

| | | |
|--|------------|--------------------|
| Salaries and Wages:— | | |
| General | \$4,436.58 | |
| Library | 1,571.42 | |
| Educational Work | 1,187.99 | |
| Theatre | 515.50 | |
| Night Cleaners | 293.80 | |
| Shoe Repair Department | 169.00 | |
| Clothing | 82.25 | \$8,256.54 |
| | | <hr/> |
| Coal \$1,135.99 Light \$635.08 | | \$1,771.07 |
| Printing | | 350.00 |
| Library: Postage | | 336.55 |
| Cleaning Materials, Laundry, etc. | | 324.20 |
| Theatre Equipment and Expense | | 202.45 |
| Sundry Supplies and Expense | | 228.10 |
| Automobile Expense | | 144.65 |
| Meals for Night Cleaners and others | | 104.30 |
| Lumber and Hardware | | 160.55 |
| Educational Expense | | 94.14 |
| Christmas Tobacco | | 81.00 |
| Insurance | | 76.20 |
| Telephone | | 75.25 |
| Sundry Office Expenses | | 71.94 |
| Auditing | | 30.00 |
| | | <hr/> |
| | | \$12,306.94 |
| Balance in Bank as at 20th May, 1933 | | 23.06 |
| | | <hr/> |
| | | <u>\$12,330.00</u> |

Audited and Verified:—

(Signed) RUTHERFORD, MOLSON, WILLIAMSON & CUSHING,

Chartered Accountants.

Montreal, June 1st, 1933.

In addition to moneys received from official and private sources as outlined in the above audited statement, donations of materials and supplies were received from sympathetic business firms in the City of Montreal to an approximate value of \$1,300.00.

*The Lions Club of Montreal spent an additional \$53888 for materials, thus making a total cash contribution of \$707.88. The Club also received and transferred to the Day Shelter donations of materials to the value of \$920.00.

Behaviour and Order

The behaviour of the men throughout the whole period of approximately six and a half months during which the Shelter was open was excellent. This is all the more remarkable in that the men were of so many different nationalities and many of these from the very lowest classes of the community. Some are known to have served jail sentences, while one man of quiet and respectable demeanour was recognized as a person who was "wanted" to answer for a charge of murder in the United States. Three times during the winter two men fell into an altercation which led to blows. They were, however, quieted down through the intervention of the Superintendent and the policeman and order was speedily restored. It was necessary only once during the entire winter to eject a man from the Shelter for bad behaviour. A few dipsomaniacs who succeeded in buying "rubbing alcohol" from druggists and smuggling it into the Shelter, speedily drinking themselves into a state of unconsciousness, were the chief nuisance. A single policeman represented the majesty of the law and even his duties were so light that he was frequently obliged to while away his somewhat extended leisure time in playing cards with the men. The fact that such an enormous number of men, of so many sorts and conditions, crowded together day after day all winter, behaved themselves so well and gave so little trouble is a continuous source of wonderment. It would seem to indicate that humanity, when reasonably well treated, will behave itself properly.

Letters from the City Recorder and the Chief of Police concerning the work of the Shelter during the winter of 1932-33

Mr. William Bowie,

c/o Day Shelter for Unemployed Men,
Corner Vitre and Chenneville Sts.,
Montreal.

Recorder's Chambers,

Montreal, 20th April, 1933.

Dear Mr. Bowie:—

In reply to your letter, the least I can do is to congratulate you again for the wonderful work you have done about the unemployed men. I have noted that the number of loiterers, beggars, who have appeared in the Recorder's Court during the last six months, is very small if we consider the depression. This is due to the fact that welfare organizations, like yours, are endeavouring to keep the men in a contented frame of mind and occupied in a wholesome way, as you say. Wishing you the success you deserve,

I beg to remain,

Yours truly,

(Sgd.) J. A. THOUIN,

Recorder of the City of Montreal.



The Stage of the Theatre

City Hall,
Montreal, April 20th, 1933.

Mr. William Bowie,
Secretary,
Day Shelter for Unemployed Men,
Montreal.

Dear Mr. Bowie:—

I am in receipt of your letter of the 19th inst., informing me that the Day Shelter for Unemployed Men will be definitely closed on the 6th of May next.

As far as I am concerned, I would prefer that it be not closed at all, inasmuch as it has been of great service to our police department, and I could even state that it has helped to a great extent the general situation in Montreal during the past season.

Believe me, dear Mr. Bowie,

Yours very truly,
(Sgd.) FERNAND DUFRESNE,
Director of the Police Department.

Donations

In addition to many very generous subscriptions toward the work carried on in the Day Shelter, there were received during the past winter, a large number of valuable donations in kind, chiefly from manufacturing and business houses in Montreal. A list of these donors is given below and the Committee wishes to acknowledge its indebtedness and express its thanks to them, as well as to Mr. B. W. Roberts of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, through whom a number of these donations were received.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Arbess, D. Regd. | Canadian Pacific Railway Co. |
| Ayerst, McKenna & Harrison Ltd. | Canadian Playing Card Co. |
| Baillargeon, J. B. Express Ltd. | Canadian Transfer Co. Ltd. |
| Beauvais, Max, Ltd. | Canadian Westinghouse Co. Ltd. |
| Berman Bros. & Co. | Carters Ink Co. |
| Bowie, Mr. Russell | Central Agency Ltd. |
| Boyd, Mr. R. E. | Clothing Bureau, Relief Committee |
| Brandram, Henderson, Ltd. | Continental Leather Co. |
| Budge Carbon Paper Manufacturing Co. | Cotton Threads Ltd. |
| Canadian Buttons Ltd. | Crown Diamond Paint Co. Ltd. |
| Canadian Cotton & Wool Waste Co. Ltd. | Daoust, Lalonde & Cie |
| Canada Envelope Co. | Darling & Brady Ltd. |

- Dawson Bros. Ltd.
Dawson, W. V. Ltd.
Deom Freres
Dodds, Mr. Jackson
Dominion Woollens & Worsteds Ltd.
Drysdale, D., Ltd.
Findlay, Mr. G. A.
Fisher, Mark, Sons & Co.
Fortier, Joseph
Frosst, Chas. & Co.
Fyon & Fyon Ltd.
Gazette Publishing Co. Ltd.
Granger Freres Ltd.
Greenshields Ltd.
Gurd, Chas., & Co.
Hassell, Mr. J.
Henderson, John, & Co.
Herald Publishing Co. Ltd.
Hodgson, Sumner & Co. Ltd.
Horner, Mr. Frank
Hudon, Hebert, Chaput Ltee.
Hughes, Owens Co. Ltd.
Hygiene Products Ltd.
Ingram & Bell
Johnson & Johnson, Ltd.
Keuffell & Esser
Knight, Mrs. W.
Lalonde, Mr. F. P.
La Patrie
Laporte, Martin & Co.
La Presse
Le Petit Journal
Le Samedi Publishing Co.
Librairie Beauchemin Ltee.
Librairie Notre Dame
Librairie St. Louis
Lighthall, Miss C. B.
Lindsay, Mr. C. W.
Lovell, John & Sons Ltd.
Lyman's Ltd.
MacAvity, Mr. H. G.
Macdonald, W. C. Incorporated
McFarlane, Son & Hogdson Ltd.
McKay, Mr.
Maletto, Mr.
Manning, Mr. O. H.
Metropolitan Stores Ltd.
Montreal Association for the Blind.
Montreal Standard Publishing Co. Ltd.
Montreal Star Co. Ltd.
Montreal Tramways Co.
Moquin, Mr. A.
Mount Royal Textiles Ltd.
Munderloh & Co. Ltd.
Nat. Drug & Chemical Co. of Can. Ltd.
Packard, L. H., & Co.
Pollack Bros. & Co.
Red Cross Society
Roneo Co. of Canada Ltd.
Sadler, Mr. W.
Sal-U-Ta Regd.
Sayer Sales Corporation
Scythes & Co. Ltd.
Semi-Ready Tailoring Ltd.
Shearer, James Co. Ltd.
Sherwin-Williams Co. of Can. Ltd.
Short, Mr.
Smith, Howard, Paper Mills Ltd.
Solex, The, Co. Ltd.
Southam Press Ltd.
Sprigings, Mr. Cecil
Standard Brands Ltd.
Swift Canadian Co. Ltd.
Tailored Shirts Ltd.
Tarshis, L. & Co.
Tooke Bros. Ltd.
Typewriter & Appliance Co. Ltd.
United Shoe Machinery Co. Ltd.
Van Golden, Mr.
Victor Talking Machine Co. Ltd.
Weir, Mrs.
Williams, Walter & Co.
Woolworth, F. W., & Co. Ltd.
Young, D. A., Ltd.

Summary of Statistics

1932-33

Period of time during which the Shelter was in Operation 194 days
(Oct. 24, 1932-May 5, 1933)

ATTENDANCE: (Men entering Shelter)

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Total attendance | 2,441,153 |
| Daily average attendance | 12,583 |
| Highest daily attendance | 19,685 |

Approximate estimate of different individuals using Shelter 10,000 to 14,000

Activities

| | |
|--|---------|
| Library | 334,791 |
| Educational (classes attended) | 12,210 |
| Cards (times played) | 461,488 |
| Checkers | 142,202 |
| Cribbage | 38,304 |
| Chess | 16,676 |
| Dominoes | 3,620 |
| Picture Puzzles | 36,246 |
| Theatre Audiences | 70,685 |
| Baseball Spectators | 17,200 |
| Baseball | 2,578 |
| Horseshoes | 785 |
| Shoes Repaired | 8,024 |
| Tailor Shop (clothes repaired) | 16,129 |
| Letters Mailed | 10,475 |

EQUIPMENT USED:

| | |
|--|---------|
| Checker Games used | 71,101 |
| (Checker games not returned) | 3 |
| Packs of Cards used | 115,372 |
| (Packs of Cards not returned) | 214 |
| Chess Games used | 8,338 |
| (Chess Games not returned) | nil |
| Cribbage Boards used | 19,652 |
| (Cribbage Boards not returned) | 2 |
| Dominoes used | 3,620 |
| (Dominoes not returned) | nil |

| | | |
|--|----|--------|
| Puzzles used | | 18,123 |
| (Puzzles not returned) | 10 | |
| Books and Magazines not returned | 47 | |

EQUIPMENT COLLECTED THROUGH APPEALS TO PUBLIC:

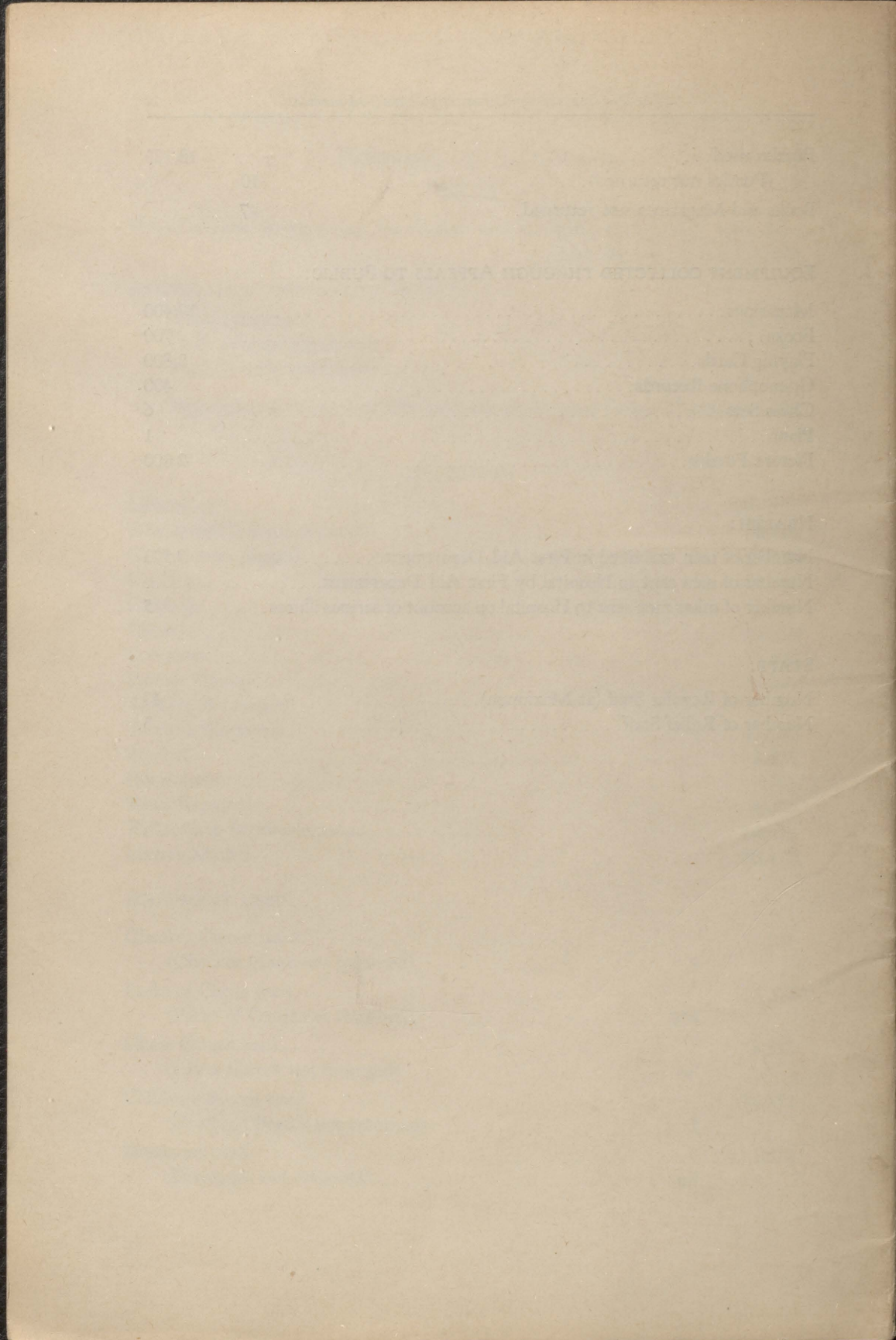
| | | |
|------------------------------|--|--------|
| Magazines | | 19,400 |
| Books | | 700 |
| Playing Cards | | 2,800 |
| Gramophone Records | | 400 |
| Chess Sets | | 6 |
| Piano | | 1 |
| Picture Puzzles | | 2,000 |

HEALTH:

| | | |
|--|--|-------|
| Number of men examined in First Aid Department | | 5,573 |
| Number of men sent to Hospital by First Aid Department | | |
| Number of other men sent to Hospital on account of serious illness | | 5 |

STAFF:

| | | |
|--|--|----|
| Number of Regular Staff (at Maximum) | | 40 |
| Number of Relief Staff | | 3 |



THE DAY SHELTER FOR
UNEMPLOYED MEN
MONTREAL

REPORT OF ITS OPERATIONS
FOR THE SECOND YEAR—
WINTER OF 1932-33

• •

MTL. PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS ASSOCIATION

**MONTREAL PARKS
& PLAYGROUNDS ASS'N INC.**
Room 205 - 1421 Atwater Avenue MONTREAL

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MCGILL UNIVERSITY

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FRANK DAWSON ADAMS

MONTREAL PAPER
& PLAYGROUND ASSN INC
1933-1934

The Day Shelter for Unemployed Men Montreal

REPORT OF ITS OPERATIONS FOR THE SECOND YEAR—
WINTER OF 1932-33

By

FRANK DAWSON ADAMS



Introduction

The origin of the Shelter and the work carried on in it during the first year in which it was operated has already been described in a pamphlet entitled "The Day Shelter for Unemployed Men in Montreal—A Social Experiment" which was issued in the month of May, 1932.

The Day Shelter in Montreal as there described was a social experiment somewhat different from any that had been tried elsewhere, one which, most unexpectedly, attracted widespread attention—enquiries concerning the work and requests for copies of the pamphlet in question having been received during the past year from no less than 69 different societies and welfare organizations engaged in unemployment work in sixteen States of the neighbouring Union and in five of the Provinces of the Dominion of Canada.

It is not necessary here to repeat what has already been written concerning the character of the Shelter and the work carried on within it during the first year of its existence, but for those who have not seen the pamphlet above mentioned a very brief resume of this may be given. Ample provision is made in Montreal at a number of different institutions for providing unemployed single men with food and beds. The Day Shelter for Unemployed Men gives neither food nor sleeping accommodation but provides a place where several thousand men, who would otherwise be wandering about the streets and almost certainly getting

into mischief, can throughout the winter season find a warm place in which to spend the day and one where they will find opportunities for both recreation and education. The building in which the work of the Day Shelter is carried on was formerly the old St. Laurent School. It is very large, occupying four sides of a whole city block situated in a poor part of the business section of the city. It is from two to four stories in height and encloses a large vacant space formerly used as the school playground. The property belongs to the Montreal Tramways Company and was placed at the disposal of the Committee through the kindly interest of K. B. Thornton, Esq., the General Manager of the Company.

It was found that the portion of the building occupying three sides of the square was sufficiently large to meet the needs of the Shelter and from this the partitions were removed and a series of very large rooms were thus secured. All of these rooms were provided with rough tables and benches, made by the men themselves. The rooms on the ground floor were arranged for games of various kinds, more particularly cards and checkers. Those on the second floor were set apart as libraries and reading rooms—or else were divided into class rooms for educational purposes. The third floor of one side of the building was equipped as a Concert Hall and Theatre and provided with the necessary dressing rooms behind the stage.

Throughout the six months of the fall, winter and spring of 1931-2, during which the Shelter was open, all of this accommodation was fully and continuously occupied. The men came to regard the Shelter as their "club," excellent relations were established between the men and the staff and no difficulty was experienced in maintaining excellent order at all times.

It should here be made clear that there are on Vitre Street, and situated about half a mile from one another, two separate institutions in which provision is made for the accommodation of unemployed single men.

The first is the "Refuge" conducted by the Montreal Relief Committee and situated at number 756 Vitre Street. In this the men are provided with meals and in an adjacent building on Inspector Street they are supplied with beds.

The second is the "Day Shelter," of which this is the second annual report, located at 163 Vitre Street, operated by another Committee under the Council of Social Agencies, in which no meals or beds are given but which is arranged for the accommodation of men during the day time, and where, as has been stated, they have a well warmed building in which they can stay and in which they can find amusement, recreation and instruction, as well as provision for repairing their boots and clothes and for securing medical advice and attention.

The Operation of the Shelter in the winter of 1932-33

The Shelter was opened on October 24, 1932, and was closed on May 6, 1933.

The following gentlemen constituted the Executive Committee:

Dr. Frank D. Adams, Chairman; George S. Mooney, Vice-Chairman; William Bowie, Secretary; A. Stanley Rough, Superintendent; Allan Macduff, Treasurer. Chairmen of Committees: *Education*, Rev. B. Thorpe; *Entertainment*, Edgar Murphy; *Foreign*, D. J. Van Bommel; *House*, C. H. Colson; *Library*, Rev. W. A. Gifford; *Boot and Shoe Repairing*, C. R. Bronsden (Lion's Club). Other members of the Executive Committee—Alderman W. N. Biggar, L. E. Brittle, Alderman G. R. Brunet, Kenneth Cook, Father Joseph Fallon, Alderman A. Filion, Wm. E. Findlay, Alderman A. E. Goyette, Dr. A. S. Lamb, Professor L. C. Marsh, A. W. McMaster, Dr. Frank G. Pedley, Carl Ruckman, Rabbi Harry T. Stern.

The smooth and successful operation of the Shelter throughout the winter was due to the continuous and individual attention given to the work by the chairmen of the several committees, as well as by the Secretary and Treasurer. In addition to the work of these gentlemen especial mention should be made of the valuable services rendered by Mr. A. W. McMaster, in securing from large commercial corporations in the city many valuable gifts in kind for the use of the Shelter. Mr. A. Stanley Rough was again this year freed from his duties in connection with Parks and Playgrounds Association in order that he might take up the duties of Superintendent of the Day Shelter. He rendered invaluable service throughout the year in this capacity. Mr. T. Morley Ewing did much valuable work in assisting Professor Marsh in securing data for his Survey, and also in connection with the conduct of the theatre.

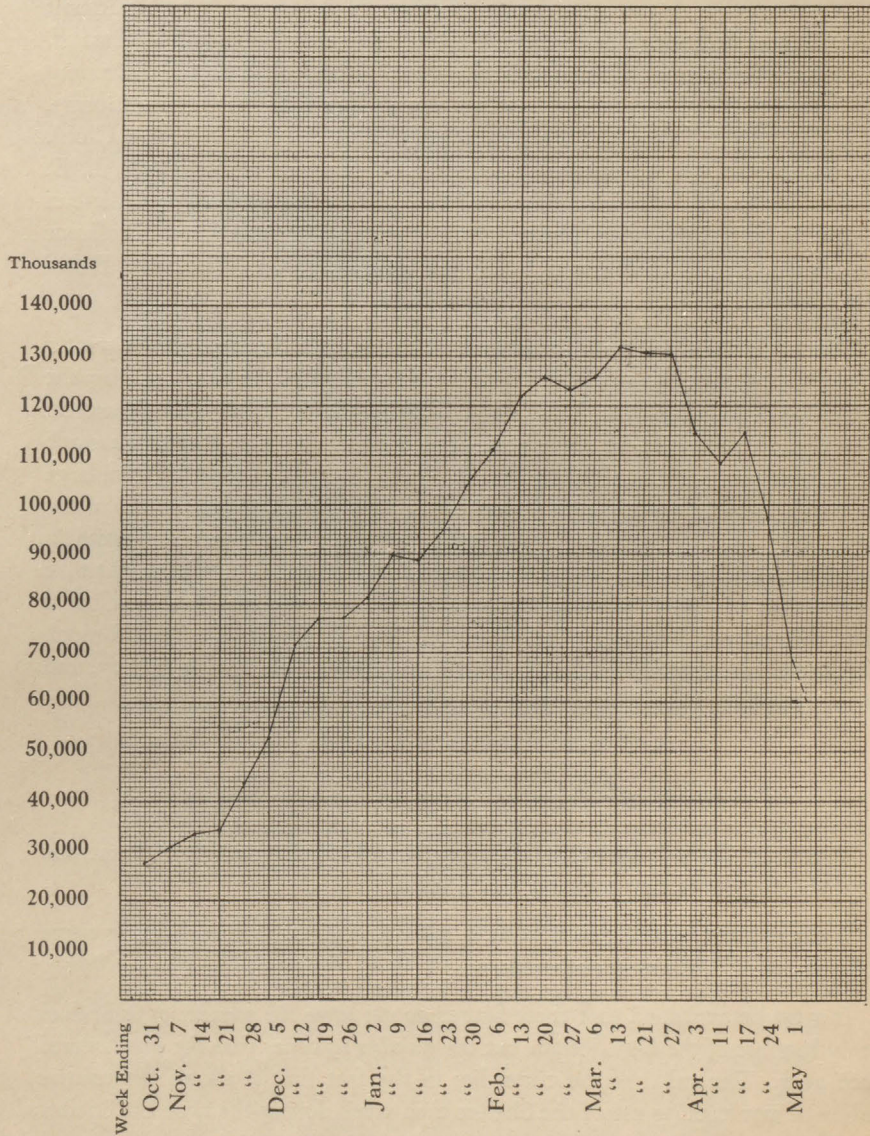
Number of Men Using the Day Shelter

Every day through the period during which the Shelter was open count was kept of the number of men entering the building.

If the number entering each week is taken and plotted, the following curve for the season of 1932-33 is obtained.

It must be explained that these figures *do not show the number of individual men making use of the Day Shelter, but the number of times that the men entered it each week*. The value of the curve lies in the fact that it shows the *relative numbers* of men making use of the Shelter each week during the time the Shelter was open.

Curve showing the number of men entering The Day Shelter for Unemployed Men each week during the winter of 1932-33



It will be noted that the number starting with 27,838 for the first week of Oct. 24 to Oct. 31 rose rapidly as the winter wore on, reaching a maximum of 132,033 in the week of March 7 to March 13, after which it declined to 68,510 in the last week, namely April 24 to May 1. After May 1 it declined still further as the Shelter closed on May 5.

The actual number of individual men who used the Shelter could only be determined by installing a system of registration and admission by cards to be presented each time the men entered. This would be cumbersome, and expensive to operate, and the result obtained would not, it was considered, warrant the outlay, more especially as it was the aim of the Committee to make access to the Shelter on the part of the men as free from restriction as possible, consistent with efficient operation. It is impossible to make any close estimate of this number since several unknown factors are involved.

The number of individual men who received relief at the Montreal Relief Committee Refuge in March, when the attendance both at this Refuge and at the Day Shelter was at its maximum for the winter, was 8,012. All the men who were given meals and beds at the Refuge came to the Day Shelter during the day time. In addition to these many came from other institutions in the city, of which there are a large number, as well as some who had rooms elsewhere. It seems certain that at least 10,000 individual men used the Shelter during the winter, while the number may have risen as high as 14,000.

Nationalities of the Men using the Day Shelter

The men using the Shelter may be arranged, as to race, in three classes—French Canadians, English speaking men and Foreigners from various European countries. A detailed registration of the nationalities was not kept at the Day Shelter but the table given below, showing the number of men who registered at the Montreal Relief Committee's Refuge during March when the attendance was larger than in any other month during the present winter, has a direct bearing on this question since, as has been mentioned, these men constitute a large proportion of those who come to the Day Shelter. For these figures the writer is indebted to Mr. Frank R. Clarke.

Montreal Relief Committee Nationality Figures

Number of persons who received relief during the
month of March, 1933

Nationalities

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------|----------|--------------|
| French Canadians | 3,134 | | 39.11 p.c. |
| English Canadians | 891 | .. 11.12 | } 20.47 p.c. |
| Great Britain | 749 | .. 9.35 | |
| U.S.A. | 49 | | |
| Germany | 27 | | |
| Poland | 327 | | |
| Roumania | 95 | | |
| Finland | 428 | | |
| Hungary | 533 | | |
| Czecko-Slovakia | 677 | | |
| France | 27 | | |
| Denmark | 26 | | |
| Sweden | 52 | | |
| Holland | 2 | | |
| Jugo-Slavia | 230 | | |
| Ukrania | 397 | | |
| Lithuania | 45 | | |
| Russia | 86 | | |
| Norway | 31 | } 3189 | 40.41 p.c. |
| Bulgaria | 18 | | |
| Austria | 12 | | |
| Switzerland | 20 | | |
| Esthonia | 4 | | |
| Belgium | 16 | | |
| Spain | 6 | | |
| Latvia | 1 | | |
| Syria | 1 | | |
| Japan | 2 | | |
| China | 16 | | |
| Italy | 102 | | |
| Greece | 6 | | |
| Armenia | 1 | | |
| Turkey | 1 | | |

8,012

99.99 p.c.



The Day Shelter—Men Waiting to Enter the Theatre

It is interesting to note the change which has taken place in the relative percentages of the three classes of men mentioned above this winter as compared with last winter. These are set forth in the following table:

| 1931-32 | | 1932-33 | |
|------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| French Canadians..... | 35.93 p.c. | | 39.11 p.c. |
| English Canadians..... | 18.30 p.c. | } 34.02 p.c. | 11.12 p.c. |
| Great Britain..... | 15.72 p.c. | | 9.35 p.c. |
| Foreigners..... | 30.04 p.c. | | 40.41 p.c. |
| | | | } 20.47 p.c. |

As will be seen the percentage of French Canadians has increased somewhat, accompanied by a large increase in the percentage of Foreigners, while the percentage of English speaking men has fallen to approximately one-half of what it was last year, the decrease being about equally divided between English Canadians and men from Great Britain.

As will be noted the percentages for the past winter of 1932-33 agree closely with those of the men entering the Day Shelter last fall given in the Survey of Prof. Marsh.

Census taken by Professor Marsh of the men who registered for admission to the Day Shelter at the time of its opening in October, 1932.

An important feature of the work of the present year was a census of the men who registered for entrance at the opening of the Shelter in October. This was taken by Prof. Leonard C. Marsh, F.S.S., of McGill University, assisted by Mr. T. Morley Ewing, as part of a comprehensive study of the unemployment situation in Canada in which he is now engaged under a grant from the Rockefeller Institution.

The writer is indebted to Professor Marsh for the accompanying figures and for advice with reference to their interpretation. The results of this survey will be examined in greater detail by Professor Marsh in relation to other statistics bearing on unemployed groups in the city, and the results of this study will appear at a later date.

In the winter of 1931-32 the men coming to the Shelter manifested a distinct aversion to filling in any forms asking for information concerning them. There was a general distrust with reference to the use to which such information might be put and they felt that a policy of "Safety first" was the better one for them to follow. It was evident, however, this Fall that a feeling of confidence had been



An Educational Class

established and when it was announced about a week before the opening of the Day Shelter, which took place on October 24, 1932, that men desiring the use of the Shelter might, if they desired, register in advance, 3,350 men presented themselves for registration and were duly enrolled, answering freely all of the thirty questions asked by Prof. Marsh and his assistants. Other men who came later were registered subsequently during the latter part of October and the early part of November, the total number of men making returns for the purpose of the Census reaching about 4,000. As these men represented a large proportion of the total number of men who attended the Shelter during the first half of the winter the results of the Census may be taken as presenting a true picture of certain factors at least in the unemployment situation in Montreal during this time, so far as unemployed single men were concerned—omitting the “white collar class” (clerks, etc.) who did not come to the Shelter but were registered elsewhere.

During the latter half of the winter the number of men coming to the Shelter increased rapidly, as has been already mentioned.

The questions asked in Prof. Marsh’s Census which are of importance as bearing upon that phase of the unemployment situation represented in the Day Shelter—with their answers—are given below. These figures are concerned only with the 3,350 men who registered before the Shelter opened.

I. *Where were the men born and what is their Nationality?*

The Census answers the question as follows:—

| | |
|--|------|
| French Canadians | 45% |
| English Canadians | 10% |
| British (born in Great Britain) | 10% |
| Foreigners (Slavs and other Eastern Europeans) | 35% |
| | 100% |

As compared with the figures for last year (winter of 1931-32) this shows a considerable increase in the numbers of French Canadians and of foreigners and a large decrease in the number of English speaking men—both of English Canadians and of men born in Great Britain.

II. *What is the age distribution of the men who come to the Shelter?*

| | |
|---------------------------------|------|
| Younger than 25 years | 8% |
| Between 25 and 40 | 42% |
| Between 40 and 50 | 24% |
| Over 50 years old | 26% |
| | 100% |

These figures show that the number of very young men coming to the Shelter is small. Half of the men are of the age (i.e., up to 40 years) when the man who works with his hands is at his highest efficiency. One quarter of these are rather past their most productive age (i.e., 40 to 50 years old). Another quarter are getting toward, or have already reached, the age when their services are no longer sought even in good times (i.e., over 50 years of age).

III. *How many of these are single men?*

75 per cent returned themselves as single men. Some of these, however, are persons with wives and families in other countries.

IV. *How many of these men are skilled and how many unskilled workers?*

| | |
|--|------|
| Highly skilled men (artisans including 2% of the "white collar class") | 16% |
| Semi skilled men | 16% |
| Unskilled men | 68% |
| | 100% |

The largest single element amongst the lowest class of these unskilled men—the "pick and shovel men"—are foreigners of Slavonic origin.

V. *In what occupations were these men engaged before they were thrown out of work?*

| | |
|---|-----|
| Manufacturing ($\frac{1}{2}$ in iron and steel plants) | 11% |
| Building and construction | 25% |
| Agriculture | 20% |
| Ordinary labourers | 30% |
| Lumbering | 3% |
| Domestic and personal service | 6% |
| | 95% |

One of the important facts to be drawn from this table is that there are a large number of men in the Day Shelter who will be unemployed every winter. These include all the agricultural workers (hired on farms around Montreal during the summer) and say one-third of the men engaged in building and construction and the same proportion of the ordinary labourers, for except in "boom times" building construction is always slowed down in winter time, and also the port of Montreal is closed.

On this basis it will be seen that 38% of the men who used the Shelter during the first half of the year, that is to say some 1,900 of these men, will be unemployed every winter.

VI. *What are (or were) the occupations of the fathers of these men?*

| | |
|--|------|
| Farmers | 45% |
| Building and construction | 10% |
| Artisans and service occupations | 35% |
| Labourers | 10% |
| | 100% |

That is to say, about one half of these men now in the Shelter left farms in Canada or in some other country to take up their residence in the city of Montreal—the other half are sons of city residents.

VII. *How many of these men are able to give any city address?*

| | |
|--|------|
| Those who have a private address | 40% |
| Those living at the Vitre Street Refuge, the Meurling Refuge or at some other similar institution and who have no city address | 50% |
| Those from whom no replies were received | 10% |
| | 100% |

This shows that nearly one-half the men who spend their day at the Day Shelter have a room somewhere in the city in which they sleep, or friends in the city to whose care their letters may be addressed. It also shows that practically all the men who sleep at the refuges spend their days in the Day Shelter, while it has already been seen that most of the men at least, who come to the Shelter get their meals at the Refuge.

VIII. *How long have these men been in Canada?*

The returns show that nearly one-half of these men have been in Canada 25 years or more. These are French Canadians and English Canadians for the most part. Of the other half, 15% (of the total) have been in Canada less than five years while the number who have been in Canada less than two years is negligible. The foreign contingent in the Shelter, therefore, does not consist of newly arrived immigrants.



First Aid

IX. How much "Steady Work" have these men had during the last four years?

| | |
|---|------|
| 25 months or more | 20% |
| 13 to 24 months | 11% |
| 4 to 12 months | 36% |
| No steady employment (or less than three months in the last four years) | 33% |
| | 100% |

X. What was the character of such "Temporary Work" as was received by these men?

| | |
|---|------|
| Farming, Lumbering, Mining, etc. | 18% |
| Constructional Work and Service Occupations | 11% |
| "General Labour" | 60% |
| Other Work | 11% |
| | 100% |

XI. Where had the men gone in search for work?

| | |
|---|------|
| Those who had not gone in search for work beyond the bounds of Greater Montreal | 55% |
| Those who had gone to various localities within the Province of Quebec but not outside the Province | 10% |
| Those who had searched for work outside the Province of Quebec | 20% |
| Those who did not answer the question in sufficient detail to be properly classed | 15% |
| | 100% |

The Census unfortunately does not show how many men in the Day Shelter came to Montreal from points outside of the Province of Quebec. The returns under Question XI however show that this was probably much less than 20%.

Recreation in the Shelter

The various forms of recreation provided for the men at the Shelter were necessarily in the main the same as those of last year. Cards and checkers were played continuously, bridge and cribbage were the favourite games of cards. The men were encouraged to arrange competitions in these and other games. A bridge tournament was held in which sixteen pairs competed playing 225 games, also cribbage and checkers competitions in which 120 and 190 men respectively were engaged. Shortly after the opening of the Shelter this year a number of the men asked that they might be provided with chess sets, which was done and about 50 men played chess daily during the rest of the season. There

was also a chess tournament in which 40 competitors played 1,600 games. Dominoes was also a favourite game. Early in the winter the Picture Puzzle fever invaded the Shelter and about 700 men were engaged in this diversion every day until the Shelter closed.

The Committee received as gifts, from various persons and societies interested in the Shelter, 2,800 packs of cards and 2,000 picture puzzles which enabled it to provide for these activities. About 500 packs of cards were used up every month. 400 gramophone records were also donated.

Early in April, as soon as the snow melted away and the playground dried up, the men were provided with the necessary equipment and the playing of baseball and quoits commenced, every foot of the ground being occupied by "teams," while an intensely interested and admiring audience occupied all the available space around the field.

The Theatre was one of the most popular sources of amusement. A performance was given every afternoon, except Saturday, from 2 till 3.30. To prevent overcrowding, the admission this year was limited to 640 persons at each performance. There was a small staff of five who organized, who arranged and took part in the entertainments, but the performers were in the main drawn from the men themselves, among whom were many good singers and dancers. From time to time outsiders from various choirs in the city volunteered their aid and occasionally jugglers, "strong men" and "artists" possessed of strange and varied attainments or abilities would happen in and offer their services for the entertainment of the unemployed men.

It was interesting to note that nothing "broad" was ever tolerated; this theatre, run by the men themselves, maintaining at least as high a level of "respectability" as any other in town, while the audience nevertheless was enthusiastic to the last degree. A new feature was introduced this year in the form of competitions between men from the audience who felt that they had some latent histrionic abilities. The audience itself acted as the judge in these, often most interesting performances, and awarded the prizes by the intensity of its applause. It might be observed that the prizes in these as in all the other competitions held in the "Shelter" were in the form of good sized standard packages of excellent tobacco, which the Committee procured at the not exorbitant price of two cents a package.

When little plays or "sketches" were given the men rehearsed in the morning, while the performances were given in the afternoon. One two-act "sketch" written and arranged by the theatre staff and which bore the optimistic title of "Happy Days," was so successful on the boards of the Day Shelter Theatre, that it was, under the direction of Mr. Lee, the manager of the Shelter Theatre, presented twice during the winter at the Orpheum Theatre before a

public audience and crowded houses. Other performances were given at various institutions during the winter.

Educational Activities

The Committee from the opening of the Day Shelter has been desirous of securing the largest attendance possible at the Educational classes. The attention of the men was repeatedly directed to the fact that such classes were provided and they were urged to avail themselves of the opportunities offered to employ their enforced leisure in securing knowledge which would be of value to them.

Only a very small proportion of them however could be induced to avail themselves of these educational opportunities. Most of them were incapable or undesirous of putting forth the mental effort needed to follow even a simple course of study; nevertheless the men who entered the educational classes worked diligently and made substantial progress.

Classes were held daily in the following subjects:

- French—Conversation and Writing.
- English—Conversation and Writing (elementary).
- English—Conversation and Writing (advanced).
- Arithmetic.
- Book-keeping.
- Mechanical Drawing.
- Show Card Writing.
- Mining and Geology (during part of the winter).
- First Aid.

There was a total enrollment of 769 men, the attendance for the whole season being 12,210.

The daily average was 84.7 men.

The instructors were thoroughly competent and the teaching was excellent.

One curious, unexpected, and at the same time suggestive incident, in connection with the educational work, was a request made on the part of a number of men for a course of lectures on mining. Some of the men were miners out of work, while others had become interested in the subject through conversation with these miners. Such a course was arranged, some of the lectures being given by one of the men themselves who had been a placer miner in British Columbia, while others were delivered by the Chairman, others by Dr. J. A. Dresser, the Directing Geologist to the Government of the Province of Quebec, and by Mr. J. A. Warburton, B.Sc. Fifty men attended the lectures and displayed a keen



The Shoe Repairing Department

interest in them and before the Shelter closed all the miners had left to look for work again in one or other of the mining areas of the Dominion.

A number of illustrated lectures dealing with various foreign countries were also given and were attended by large and appreciative audiences which seem to indicate the educational work along this line might be followed out with advantage should the Day Shelter be opened again next winter.

The Libraries and Reading Rooms

The two libraries with their reading rooms were important educational centres. In the former some 2,000 well selected books were on the shelves, while 19,400 magazines were given by various donors during the winter. The leading daily newspapers also each supplied the Shelter with several copies of their respective issues. The daily papers were placed on suitable racks in the reading rooms, while men drew books and magazines from the libraries, depositing with the librarians their admission cards, which were given back to them when the books or magazines were returned. The reading rooms were always crowded. The magazines were here, as everywhere else in the community, in greater demand than the books, although many of the men read books of real merit and often works quite recondite in character. The libraries contained for the most part works in the English language, although there was also a good selection of French books and magazines, as well as a smaller number of publications in Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Polish, Finnish, German, Spanish and Italian. The greater number of readers chose English works, a somewhat smaller number read literature in French, while only a few asked for works in the other languages.

In each library there were also special writing tables for the men. Paper and envelopes were provided and the letters when written were given to the Chief Librarian, by whom they were stamped and mailed.

Among these letters were those addressed to all parts of Canada. Of those sent to points outside of the Province of Quebec letters to Toronto and Ottawa were most numerous. Others were sent to friends and relatives in the United States and in the following countries of Europe:—

| | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|--|
| Great Britain | Switzerland | It is of interest to note that letters were also sent to:— |
| Ireland | Belgium | |
| Germany | Russia | Argentina |
| Austria | Yugo Slavia | India |
| Norway | Czecho Slavia | Siam |
| Sweden | Poland (large number) | China |
| Denmark | Roumania | Manchuria |
| Finland | Hungary | |
| | Spain | |

In the six and a half months during which the Day Shelter was open 10,475 letters were mailed. The postage for these amounted to \$336.45. The average amount of postage per letter being 3.21 cents.

New Ventures this Year

In addition to those activities which were carried on last year and which will always form prominent features in the work of the Day Shelter if it is continued in future years, three new and important features were introduced—namely:—

1. Boot Repairing Department.
2. Clothes Mending Department.
3. First Aid Department.

The Boot Repairing Department

At the opening of the Shelter this season fifty of the men were selected at random and their boots were examined. These were in most cases found to be in a bad, and in some cases, a shocking condition. This fact was brought to the attention of the Lions Club and this body, which has furthered so much philanthropic work in Montreal, undertook to equip and maintain a boot repairing department, the operation of this being placed in charge of the Superintendent of the Shelter. This department was opened on November 23rd and proved to be most successful.

The Committee was fortunate in securing the services of an experienced shoemaker who had had long experience in the kind of work required, having been Sergeant Cobbler in one of the regiments of the Canadian Expeditionary Force in the Great War. It was thought at first that he might be able to teach the men how to repair their own boots, but it was found that the great majority of them knew absolutely nothing about such work and giving the necessary instruction to even a small number of the men would engage the whole time of the cobbler. It was found to be much better, easier and more expeditious for him to undertake the major part of the repairs himself and then hand the boots to their owners for the final trimming and sandpapering. A great demand for the work at once arose and it was found that one man could not possibly cope with it. When, however, the work was well under way, four other cobblers who were among the unemployed men in the Shelter volunteered to give their services gratis to help on the good work, so that there were often five cobblers at one time engaged in this important department. No men were allowed to bring in boots for repairs, only those who came with their boots on their feet were attended to. On an average about 50 pairs of boots were repaired each day. During the time that the shoe repairing department was open, which was 163 days, 8,024 pairs of boots were repaired.

The Clothes Repairing Department

As the period of depression lengthens out the clothes even of men who were originally well dressed become threadbare and need to be patched or repaired. Last winter men were seen from time to time in the yard or some remote corner of the building endeavouring to effect such repairs under conditions of manifest difficulty.

A clothes repairing department was accordingly established this year in one of the long rooms where the cobblers were at work. An admirable tailor with one arm was found among the men resorting to the Shelter, and he was placed in charge of this work. A number of tables were provided, around which the men whose clothes needed repairing were seated. The tailor wielding a large pair of scissors controlled the whole situation. Great parcels of cloth samples, linings, boxes of buttons of all kinds, hanks of heavy thread of various colours, together with needles of all sizes, were donated by various wholesale firms in the city. The tailor inspected each garment requiring to be repaired, cut out the parts which needed to be renewed, selected new pieces to take their place, cut these to the requisite size and shape and set the owner to work sewing them on. Every man can sew, so that the repairs were completed by the men themselves, although in some cases not without a certain amount of concomitant profanity, especially when the added pieces refused to lie flat or puckered up under the amateur treatment to which they were subjected. All, however, was eventually brought to a satisfactory completion. In this department during the season no less than 16,129 garments were repaired and their owners made respectable members of the community.

The First Aid Department

The First Aid work which was inaugurated this winter proved to be of especial importance and met a great need. A small room in the educational department was set aside for this work which was put in charge of an experienced member of the St. John's Ambulance Corps, a machinist by trade who was out of work, and who with an assistant, discharged his duties admirably. All men who had sustained minor injuries or whose health seemed to be impaired were urged to avail themselves of the services of this department. A large number of men responded, about 200 presenting themselves for examination every week. All minor ailments were treated directly, and when the cases proved to be serious the men were sent to the Montreal General Hospital, where they were at once attended to. The Committee is desirous of acknowledging its indebtedness to this Hospital for the prompt attention received by all men sent to it from the Day Shelter. In a number of cases men were found to have some disease in its incipient stages and were directed what to do in order that a permanent cure might be effected.



Men Mending Their Clothes

During the winter no less than 5,473 men were examined and if necessary treated, and 128 were sent to the Montreal General or some other hospital.

Barber

As from time to time men had been seen in the Shelter having their hair cut by one of their friends, it had been intended to install a barber and provide proper facilities for his work. On further investigation however it was found that there was a "Barber's College" near the Day Shelter, this seat of learning having been established for the training of persons who desired to become barbers. This "College" being anxious to secure persons on whom its "students" might practise, sent a deputation to the Day Shelter asking for co-operation in its educational work. This was freely given by the Shelter and ample and continuous facilities were thus provided for the relief of all persons whose hair had grown too long. Further provision by the Shelter itself therefore seemed to be unnecessary.

Finances

As has already been stated the building used for the Day Shelter is owned by the Montreal Tramways Company and is by this Company placed at the disposal of the Day Shelter Committee free of charge, the Company also from time to time making certain minor repairs which are required to maintain the building in good condition. At the opening of the present season the equipment installed in the Fall of 1931 was ready for use again and only a small additional expenditure was required for extension or renewal. In the season of 1931-32 furthermore the decision to open a Day Shelter at all was not reached until early in October, and it was therefore necessary to equip and open the building with the least possible delay. Purchases also had to be made quickly and for immediate delivery.

During the past season of 1932-33, the Committee with more time at its disposal was able to buy more cheaply and also to secure many large donations in kind. Furthermore with a year of previous experience it was found possible to effect certain economies in administration. On the other hand, the installation and operation of the Boot and Shoe Repairing Department, the Clothes Repairing Department and the First Aid work, which were new and additional features this season, as well as the fact that the Shelter was kept open longer, entailed a considerable increase in expenditure. The work of the Committee was this season greatly facilitated by the fact that it received from the Emergency Relief Fund a much larger grant than last year, namely \$7,000 instead of \$2,000. While this amount was by no means sufficient to defray the whole cost of operating the Shelter, receiving it made it unnecessary for the Committee to collect so large an amount as last year by private subscription.

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

RECEIPTS

| | |
|--|------------|
| Grant Montreal Relief Committee | \$7,000.00 |
| Montreal Parks and Playgrounds Association | 1,240.80 |

Donations:

| | | |
|--|------------|----------|
| Sundry | \$1,983.00 | |
| For Library (United Church) | 1,048.00 | |
| For Educational Work (Anglican Church) | 797.20 | |
| *For Shoe Repair Department (Lions Club) | 169.00 | |
| For Theatrical Department | 75.00 | 4,072.20 |

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Sale of Magazines | 17.00 |
| | <u>\$12,330.00</u> |

DISBURSEMENTS

Salaries and Wages:—

| | | |
|----------------------------------|------------|------------|
| General | \$4,436.58 | |
| Library | 1,571.42 | |
| Educational Work | 1,187.99 | |
| Theatre | 515.50 | |
| Night Cleaners | 293.80 | |
| Shoe Repair Department | 169.00 | |
| Clothing | 82.25 | \$8,256.54 |

| | | |
|---|--|------------|
| Coal \$1,135.99 Light \$635.08 | | \$1,771.07 |
| Printing | | 350.00 |
| Library: Postage | | 336.55 |
| Cleaning Materials, Laundry, etc. | | 324.20 |
| Theatre Equipment and Expense | | 202.45 |
| Sundry Supplies and Expense | | 228.10 |
| Automobile Expense | | 144.65 |
| Meals for Night Cleaners and others | | 104.30 |
| Lumber and Hardware | | 160.55 |
| Educational Expense | | 94.14 |
| Christmas Tobacco | | 81.00 |
| Insurance | | 76.20 |
| Telephone | | 75.25 |
| Sundry Office Expenses | | 71.94 |
| Auditing | | 30.00 |

\$12,306.94

| | |
|--|-------|
| Balance in Bank as at 20th May, 1933 | 23.06 |
|--|-------|

\$12,330.00

Audited and Verified:—

(Signed) RUTHERFORD, MOLSON, WILLIAMSON & CUSHING,
Chartered Accountants.

Montreal, June 1st, 1933.

In addition to moneys received from official and private sources as outlined in the above audited statement, donations of materials and supplies were received from sympathetic business firms in the City of Montreal to an approximate value of \$1,300.00.

*The Lions Club of Montreal spent an additional \$538.88 for materials, thus making a total cash contribution of \$707.88. The Club also received and transferred to the Day Shelter donations of materials to the value of \$920.00.

Behaviour and Order

The behaviour of the men throughout the whole period of approximately six and a half months during which the Shelter was open was excellent. This is all the more remarkable in that the men were of so many different nationalities and many of these from the very lowest classes of the community. Some are known to have served jail sentences, while one man of quiet and respectable demeanour was recognized as a person who was "wanted" to answer for a charge of murder in the United States. Three times during the winter two men fell into an altercation which led to blows. They were, however, quieted down through the intervention of the Superintendent and the policeman and order was speedily restored. It was necessary only once during the entire winter to eject a man from the Shelter for bad behaviour. A few dipsomaniacs who succeeded in buying "rubbing alcohol" from druggists and smuggling it into the Shelter, speedily drinking themselves into a state of unconsciousness, were the chief nuisance. A single policeman represented the majesty of the law and even his duties were so light that he was frequently obliged to while away his somewhat extended leisure time in playing cards with the men. The fact that such an enormous number of men, of so many sorts and conditions, crowded together day after day all winter, behaved themselves so well and gave so little trouble is a continuous source of wonderment. It would seem to indicate that humanity, when reasonably well treated, will behave itself properly.

Letters from the City Recorder and the Chief of Police concerning the work of the Shelter during the winter of 1932-33

Recorder's Chambers,
Montreal, 20th April, 1933.

Mr. William Bowie,
c/o Day Shelter for Unemployed Men,
Corner Vitre and Chenneville Sts.,
Montreal.

Dear Mr. Bowie:—

In reply to your letter, the least I can do is to congratulate you again for the wonderful work you have done about the unemployed men. I have noted that the number of loiterers, beggars, who have appeared in the Recorder's Court during the last six months, is very small if we consider the depression. This is due to the fact that welfare organizations, like yours, are endeavouring to keep the men in a contented frame of mind and occupied in a wholesome way, as you say. Wishing you the success you deserve,

I beg to remain,

Yours truly,

(Sgd.) J. A. THOUIN,

Recorder of the City of Montreal.



The Stage of the Theatre

City Hall,
Montreal, April 20th, 1933.

Mr. William Bowie,
Secretary,
Day Shelter for Unemployed Men,
Montreal.

Dear Mr. Bowie:—

I am in receipt of your letter of the 19th inst., informing me that the Day Shelter for Unemployed Men will be definitely closed on the 6th of May next.

As far as I am concerned, I would prefer that it be not closed at all, inasmuch as it has been of great service to our police department, and I could even state that it has helped to a great extent the general situation in Montreal during the past season.

Believe me, dear Mr. Bowie,

Yours very truly,

(Sgd.) FERNAND DUFRESNE,
Director of the Police Department.

Donations

In addition to many very generous subscriptions toward the work carried on in the Day Shelter, there were received during the past winter, a large number of valuable donations in kind, chiefly from manufacturing and business houses in Montreal. A list of these donors is given below and the Committee wishes to acknowledge its indebtedness and express its thanks to them, as well as to Mr. B. W. Roberts of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, through whom a number of these donations were received.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Arbess, D. Regd. | Canadian Pacific Railway Co. |
| Ayerst, McKenna & Harrison Ltd. | Canadian Playing Card Co. |
| Baillargeon, J. B. Express Ltd. | Canadian Transfer Co. Ltd. |
| Beauvais, Max, Ltd. | Canadian Westinghouse Co. Ltd. |
| Berman Bros. & Co. | Carters Ink Co. |
| Bowie, Mr. Russell | Central Agency Ltd. |
| Boyd, Mr. R. E. | Clothing Bureau, Relief Committee |
| Brandram, Henderson, Ltd. | Continental Leather Co. |
| Budge Carbon Paper Manufacturing Co. | Cotton Threads Ltd. |
| Canadian Buttons Ltd. | Crown Diamond Paint Co. Ltd. |
| Canadian Cotton & Wool Waste Co. Ltd. | Daoust, Lalonde & Cie |
| Canada Envelope Co. | Darling & Brady Ltd. |

- Dawson Bros. Ltd.
Dawson, W. V. Ltd.
Deom Freres
Dodds, Mr. Jackson
Dominion Woollens & Worsteds Ltd.
Drysdale, D., Ltd.
Findlay, Mr. G. A.
Fisher, Mark, Sons & Co.
Fortier, Joseph
Frosst, Chas. & Co.
Fyon & Fyon Ltd.
Gazette Publishing Co. Ltd.
Granger Freres Ltd.
Greenshields Ltd.
Gurd, Chas., & Co.
Hassell, Mr. J.
Henderson, John, & Co.
Herald Publishing Co. Ltd.
Hodgson, Sumner & Co. Ltd.
Horner, Mr. Frank
Hudon, Hebert, Chaput Ltee.
Hughes, Owens Co. Ltd.
Hygiene Products Ltd.
Ingram & Bell
Johnson & Johnson, Ltd.
Keuffell & Esser
Knight, Mrs. W.
Lalonde, Mr. F. P.
La Patrie
Laporte, Martin & Co.
La Presse
Le Petit Journal
Le Samedi Publishing Co.
Librairie Beauchemin Ltee.
Librairie Notre Dame
Librairie St. Louis
Lighthall, Miss C. B.
Lindsay, Mr. C. W.
Lovell, John & Sons Ltd.
Lyman's Ltd.
MacAvity, Mr. H. G.
Macdonald, W. C. Incorporated
McFarlane, Son & Hogdson Ltd.
McKay, Mr.
Maletto, Mr.
Manning, Mr. O. H.
Metropolitan Stores Ltd.
Montreal Association for the Blind.
Montreal Standard Publishing Co. Ltd.
Montreal Star Co. Ltd.
Montreal Tramways Co.
Moquin, Mr. A.
Mount Royal Textiles Ltd.
Munderloh & Co. Ltd.
Nat. Drug & Chemical Co. of Can. Ltd.
Packard, L. H., & Co.
Pollack Bros. & Co.
Red Cross Society
Roneo Co. of Canada Ltd.
Sadler, Mr. W.
Sal-U-Ta Regd.
Sayer Sales Corporation
Scythes & Co. Ltd.
Semi-Ready Tailoring Ltd.
Shearer, James Co. Ltd.
Sherwin-Williams Co. of Can. Ltd.
Short, Mr.
Smith, Howard, Paper Mills Ltd.
Solex, The, Co. Ltd.
Southam Press Ltd.
Sprigings, Mr. Cecil
Standard Brands Ltd.
Swift Canadian Co. Ltd.
Tailored Shirts Ltd.
Tarshis, L. & Co.
Tooke Bros. Ltd.
Typewriter & Appliance Co. Ltd.
United Shoe Machinery Co. Ltd.
Van Golden, Mr.
Victor Talking Machine Co. Ltd.
Weir, Mrs.
Williams, Walter & Co.
Woolworth, F. W., & Co. Ltd.
Young, D. A., Ltd.

Summary of Statistics

1932-33

Period of time during which the Shelter was in Operation 194 days
(Oct. 24, 1932-May 5, 1933)

ATTENDANCE: (Men entering Shelter)

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Total attendance | 2,441,153 |
| Daily average attendance | 12,583 |
| Highest daily attendance | 19,685 |

Approximate estimate of different individuals using Shelter 10,000 to 14,000

Activities

| | |
|--|---------|
| Library | 334,791 |
| Educational (classes attended) | 12,210 |
| Cards (times played) | 461,488 |
| Checkers | 142,202 |
| Cribbage | 38,304 |
| Chess | 16,676 |
| Dominoes | 3,620 |
| Picture Puzzles | 36,246 |
| Theatre Audiences | 70,685 |
| Baseball Spectators | 17,200 |
| Baseball | 2,578 |
| Horseshoes | 785 |
| Shoes Repaired | 8,024 |
| Tailor Shop (clothes repaired) | 16,129 |
| Letters Mailed | 10,475 |

EQUIPMENT USED:

| | |
|--|---------|
| Checker Games used | 71,101 |
| (Checker games not returned) | 3 |
| Packs of Cards used | 115,372 |
| (Packs of Cards not returned) | 214 |
| Chess Games used | 8,338 |
| (Chess Games not returned) | nil |
| Cribbage Boards used | 19,652 |
| (Cribbage Boards not returned) | 2 |
| Dominoes used | 3,620 |
| (Dominoes not returned) | nil |

| | |
|--|--------|
| Puzzles used | 18,123 |
| (Puzzles not returned) | 10 |
| Books and Magazines not returned | 47 |

EQUIPMENT COLLECTED THROUGH APPEALS TO PUBLIC:

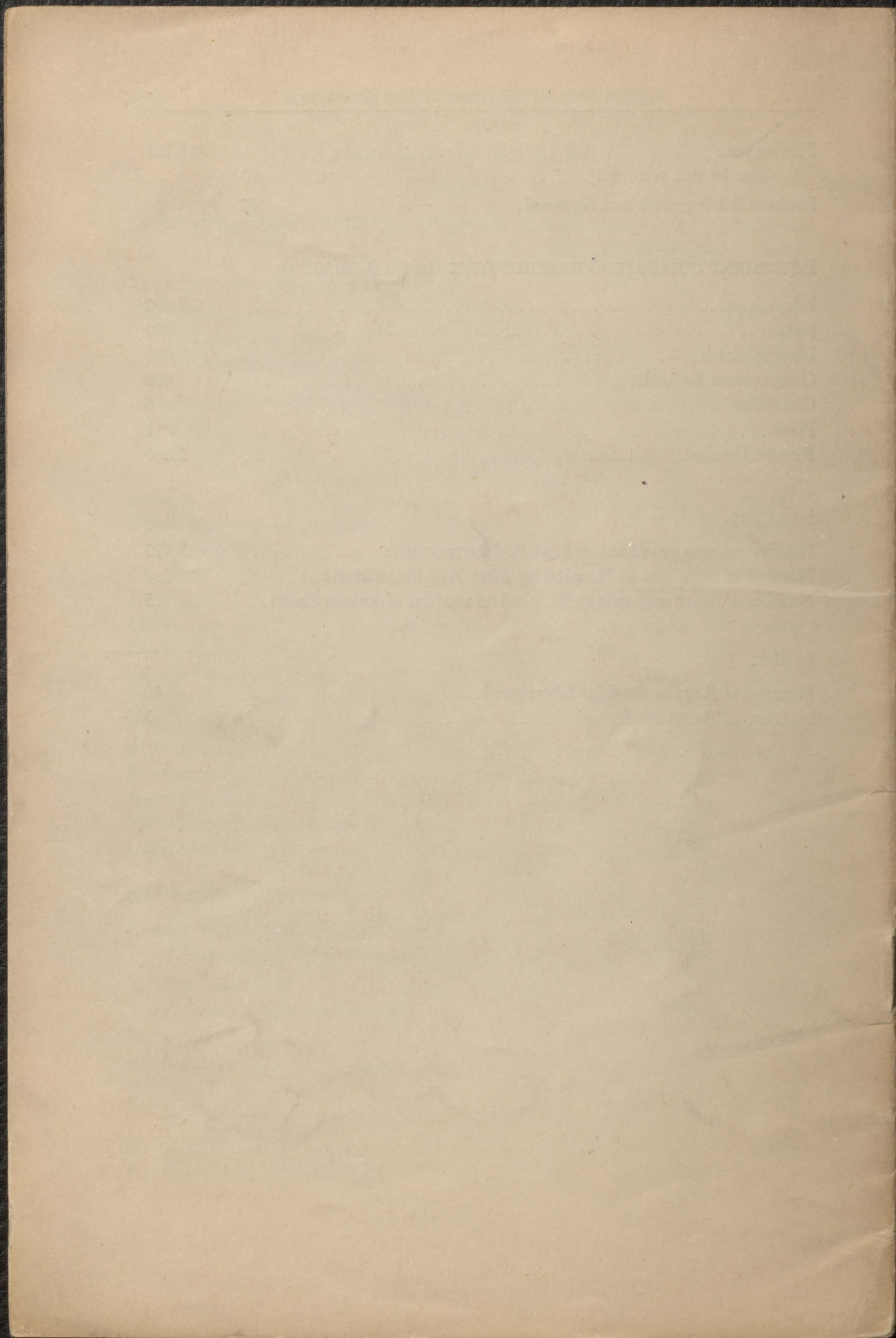
| | |
|------------------------------|--------|
| Magazines | 19,400 |
| Books | 700 |
| Playing Cards | 2,800 |
| Gramophone Records | 400 |
| Chess Sets | 6 |
| Piano | 1 |
| Picture Puzzles | 2,000 |

HEALTH:

| | |
|--|-------|
| Number of men examined in First Aid Department | 5,573 |
| Number of men sent to Hospital by First Aid Department | |
| Number of other men sent to Hospital on account of serious illness | 5 |

STAFF:

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of Regular Staff (at Maximum) | 40 |
| Number of Relief Staff | 3 |



THE DAY SHELTER FOR
UNEMPLOYED MEN
MONTREAL

REPORT OF ITS OPERATIONS
FOR THE THIRD YEAR—
WINTER OF 1933-34

∴

**MONTREAL PARKS
& PLAYGROUNDS ASS'N INC.**
Room 205 - 1421 Atwater Avenue MONTREAL

FRANK DAWSON ADAMS
MCGILL UNIVERSITY

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BY
FRANK DAWSON ADAMS

MONTREAL PARKS
& PLAYGROUNDS ASSN INC
Point St-Louis - 1451 Avenue Montrose MONTREAL

The Day Shelter for Unemployed Men Montreal

REPORT OF ITS OPERATIONS FOR THE THIRD YEAR
WINTER OF 1933-34

By

FRANK DAWSON ADAMS



Introduction

The Day Shelter, as its name implies, provides for the unemployed single men who are in the City of Montreal during the long and cold winter season, a place where they can spend the day. Other institutions provide them with food and beds, neither of which are supplied at the Day Shelter, but few of these establishments allow the men to remain in their buildings during the day, nor are they allowed to congregate in public buildings and if they have no homes—which is the case with most of them—they must walk the streets, be the weather good or bad, in the rain or 20° below zero, usually poorly shod and with the most inadequate clothing. The Day Shelter provides for the one great need of these unfortunate men—a building where, under the law, during the day they have a right to go and to remain and where they will be warm and dry, and where they can sit down in comfort.

But three or four thousand men huddled together in a building, most of whom have not been able to find any continuous employment for the past year or more and many of whom see little ahead for them in the future, are apt to lose heart and hope, should be provided with something to do, something which will at least occupy them and which will, if possible, have an educational value so that their present enforced leisure may so far as possible be turned to some useful account in the future.

The men in the Day Shelter come from various classes of the community. Very few of them belong to the "White Collar class", they are almost all men who work with their hands, some are good mechanics, but more are city labourers or lumbermen or farm hands. Most of them are poorly educated, 25 per cent of them are over fifty years of age, a time of life when men, especially in hard times, find it increasingly difficult to secure work in competition with younger and more active men.

Still others are men who are manifestly unfitted for hard and continuous labour. The men as a whole, in short, belong to the more needy portion of the lower ranks of the community.

It has been a rule of the Day Shelter ever since it was opened, that while certain necessary rules are made and enforced, the men should always be treated with courtesy and consideration, having in mind that they are at least human beings and entitled to be treated as such. This has worked out excellently, and the men have responded to the treatment with the result that in the three years during which the Day Shelter has been in existence there have been no disturbances and the behaviour of the men has left nothing to be desired. A single policeman in the building has always been sufficient to uphold the majesty of the law and his services have been directed chiefly to looking after a certain small group of men who, when they can secure the necessary means by begging or otherwise, purchase from some drug store what is known as "Rubbing Alcohol" which these establishments are allowed to keep for medical purposes and smuggle it into the Shelter, and having drunk it, in a few minutes fall into a deadly stupor and have to be removed. The policeman has, in fact, always been popular with the men who regard him as an important personage in the life of their community in that he sees to it that no one interferes with the smooth running of the establishment.

Sources of Funds for the Support of the Day Shelter.

The Day Shelter was opened in October 1931 and during the first winter of its operation was financed chiefly by private subscriptions, grants from the Anglican and United Churches and by a donation from the Parks & Playgrounds Association. It also received a grant of \$2,000 from the Emergency Relief Fund, a fund provided jointly by the Federal Government, the Provincial Government and the City of Montreal. During this first winter it was necessary to secure by private subscription a sum amounting to about one half of the total expenditure, owing to the fact that the decision to open a Day Shelter was reached only a few weeks before the winter set in, and there was no time to attempt to secure more adequate support from Government or Municipal funds.

The work of the Day Shelter during this first winter established the fact that it was rendering a great service to the whole community and to the public at large, as shown by the highly appreciative letters concerning its work received from the Director of Police Services, the Recorder, the Press and from many citizens who visited the building. Such being the case, the Committee felt that the support of the Day Shelter being a service to the public at large should not be made an additional burden to be borne by a few private subscribers.

At the opening of the second year the Committee in charge of the Shelter, therefore, laid this matter before the Montreal Relief Committee who administer the funds provided jointly by the Governments and the City and obtained from it

a grant of \$7,000 for the work of the Shelter. This amounted to \$1,077 per month during the 6½ months during which the Shelter was open. As it cost \$1,900 per month to operate the Shelter, the Committee were therefore under the necessity of securing very considerable additional sums through gifts from private subscription and other sources.

Before the Shelter opened for the third winter—that of 1933-34—a new act had been passed dealing with the distribution of Government Funds voted for the relief of unemployment and the auditors of the Province of Quebec held that the Day Shelter did not come within the terms of this new Act. Application was therefore made to the Council of the City of Montreal for a grant to carry on the work of the Day Shelter during this third winter. This application was at first refused and then granted, the sum of \$1,500 per month being finally allotted to the Day Shelter through the Montreal Relief Commission. So much time was lost before these negotiations were successful that it was not until the middle of December that the grant was made available and the Day Shelter could be opened. A full statement of income and expenditure for the year will be found under the heading of "*Finances.*"

This grant from the City could however only be used for the actual upkeep of the Shelter, that is, for payment of the Staff, heating, lighting, etc., and was barely sufficient for that purpose. All the activities carried on in the building had still to be met by subscriptions from other sources. A subscription of \$1,000 from the Andrews Home (representing the Anglican Church) met the requirements of the Educational and First Aid work, another from the United Church was applied to defraying the expenses of the Library and Reading Room, the Lions Club undertook to pay the total cost of maintaining the Boot and Shoe Repairing Department. By the aid of these and a few other smaller subscriptions and the exercise of the strictest economy in every department of the Shelter's activities, expenses were cut down to an absolute minimum, and it was found possible to close the books for the year with a small surplus.

The Work of the Day Shelter during the Winter of 1933-34

Owing to the reasons stated above, the Day Shelter was not opened until December 18th and it was closed on April 15th, making a total of 119 days or practically three months of operation.

The following persons constituted the Executive Committee:

Dr. Frank D. Adams, Chairman; George S. Mooney, Vice-Chairman; Capt. William Bowie, Secretary; Clifford N. Taylor, Superintendent; Allan Macduff, Treasurer. Chairmen of Committees: *House*, C. H. Colson; *Purchasing*, A. W. McMaster; *Educational*, D. J. Van Bommel and Carl Rucknan; *Library*, Dr. W. A. Gifford; *Boot and Shoe Repairing*, C. R. Bronsden (of the Lions Club). Other members of the Committee—Alderman W. H. Biggar, L. E. Brittle,

Alderman G. R. Brunet, Father Joseph Fallon, Alderman A. Filion, Wm. E. Findlay, Alderman A. E. Goyette, Dr. A. S. Lamb, Professor L. C. Marsh, Dr. Frank G. Pedley, Rabbi Harry J. Stern.

The Committee desires here to mention especially the excellent services by Mr. Clifford N. Taylor, the Superintendent of the Day Shelter, whose untiring energy, tact, kindness and administrative ability won for him the appreciation of the Committee and the confidence of the men.

Number of Men using the Day Shelter and their Nationalities

The number of men who came to the Day Shelter during the past winter of 1933-34 was much smaller than in either of the two previous years during which the Shelter was in operation. This is a fact for sincere congratulation on the part of all concerned. A count was kept of the number of men entering the Shelter each day. This can be readily done and while it does not represent the actual number of men using the Shelter—for most of the men go out for their midday meal and return for the afternoon, while others bring a lunch with them and remain in the Shelter all day, and still others come for a part of the day only—the figures serve for purposes of comparison, showing the *relative* number of men using the building each day, month or year.

In the winter of 1932-33, the Shelter opened on October 24th and 27,838 men entered it during the first week, the numbers rose rapidly week by week to maximum which was reached in the middle of March and then fell away again to 60,000 in the first week of May, at which time the Shelter closed.

In the winter which has just passed, the Shelter, as above mentioned, did not open until December 18th, and in the first week was used by 29,000 men, or approximately the same number that entered the Shelter during the first week in which it was open in the previous year. The second week the attendance rose to 42,000 and continued to run between 33,000 and 43,000 entrances per week for the rest of the winter, the average number of persons entering per week being 42,434 or 6,062 each day. The total number of entrances for the year was 721,378. The average daily attendance was about one-half of that of the previous year (1932-33).

This great decrease in attendance was at once noticed in entering the building, for in 1932-33 five very large rooms were required to accommodate the men and these were often overcrowded, while in the past winter of 1933-34, only three of the rooms were needed and there was in them always ample space to seat all the men.

This reduction in numbers was probably due in large measure to the number of men who went to the Government Camps which were opened to afford work for unemployed men during the past winter.

The men attending the Shelter fall into three groups, French-Canadians, English-speaking men (Canadians of British origin and men from Great Britain) and "New Canadians," that is, men of foreign extraction, coming chiefly from Czecho-Slovakia, Jugo-Slavia, Hungary, Finland, Poland and Ukraina.

On January 21st a count was made of the number of men belonging to each of these groups among the men that entered the Day Shelter during the first hour that it was opened. The results of this count were as follows:

| | |
|--|-------------|
| French-Canadians | 46 per cent |
| English Canadians (and men from Great Britain) | 27 per cent |
| "New Canadians" | 27 per cent |
| | 100 |

As will be seen, nearly one-half of the men coming to the Day Shelter are French-Canadians.

Educational Activities

From the time that the Day Shelter was first opened the Committee endeavoured to induce the men attending it to make use of their time in securing a better education than they already possessed. For this purpose classes were established in various subjects and the men were urged to attend them. The work taken up in these classes was necessarily of the most elementary character, for the great majority of the men had received but little schooling. Relatively few of them, however, could be induced to avail themselves of the opportunities for serious study. For most of them the intellectual effort required was too great and they did not think that the results would be commensurate with the labour involved. Their literary aspirations were satisfied by perusing the magazines, or in the case of those who read easily, by availing themselves of the books in the library. In this respect, perhaps, they did not differ greatly from most of the other and more favoured classes of the community.

Some of the men, however, joined the classes which were established and pursued their courses of study diligently throughout the winter. The courses of study offered were the following:

| | |
|---|------------|
| French (speaking and writing) | 65 lessons |
| English " " " | 65 " |
| Arithmetic | 65 " |
| Book-keeping | 31 " |
| First Aid | 7 " |
| Elementary English | 65 " |

In these courses there was a total enrollment of 220 men with an average daily attendance of 62. Many of the men took two or more courses. The instruction was given by the following four very competent teachers—

P. G. Pugsley; W. J. Van Bommel; J. G. Bennett and John F. Proskurin. The First Aid was given by S. A. Gidlow, Provincial Secretary of St. John's Ambulance Association.

This year the Committee endeavoured to extend this educational work as far as possible among the "New Canadians" coming chiefly from the Slavonic populations of Central Europe. It is most important, of course, for these men, if they are to become successful and useful citizens of Canada, that they should learn to speak the English language. Most of them were practically ignorant of it although they had been in Canada for several years. In carrying out this educational programme the Committee were most fortunate in securing as a teacher Mr. John F. Proskurin, a young Russian gentleman who was thoroughly conversant with six of the Slavonic languages and who was also an excellent teacher. Mr. Proskurin carried on an educational campaign among the "New Canadians" who came to the Day Shelter, impressing upon them the importance of learning English in their own interest, in order that they might take their place as Canadian citizens, with the result that 102 of them enrolled themselves in the class for "Elementary English" which was established especially for them. The class was so large that it became necessary to divide it into two sections. The men proved to be very eager and diligent students and at the close of the winter, 19 of the men had made such remarkable progress that they were able to read simple English quite well.

A miniature "Convocation" was held in the Educational Department of the Shelter at the close of the season, and 33 certificates were awarded to these men, setting forth the courses of study which they had followed and the success they had achieved. It is of interest, as showing the racial origin of the class, to record the following list of the men winning these certificates.

| | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| J. Kubus | Czecho-Slovakia | J. Kiss | Hungary |
| W. Kubow | " | V. Zator | Poland |
| A. Salo | Finland | J. Junas | Czecho-Slovakia |
| J. Mulliniemi | " | H. Rejeb | Turkey |
| J. Koponen | " | J. Viznicky | Hungary |
| J. Blazo | Czecho-Slovakia | F. Piwnik | Poland |
| F. Bucek | " | B. Ristoff | Bulgaria |
| A. Savron | Ukrainia | J. Ruzam | Czecho-Slovakia |
| A. Durkaoz | Poland | G. Mester | Hungary |
| J. Vaiciunas | Lithuania | | |

The success of this educational effort for "New Canadians" opens up a large and new field of work for the Day Shelter, one which should be followed up and extended if the Day Shelter is continued in the coming year.

While some men in the Shelter took up the serious study of certain subjects in regular classes, a much larger number were interested in popular lectures on various subjects, some delivered in English and others in French, especially if these were illustrated. A series of such lectures, on subjects having an educational value were therefore arranged, these being delivered by various gentlemen in the city, most of whom were connected with our Universities or other educational establishments. A list of these lectures is given below and the Committee of the Shelter desire to express their thanks to the various speakers who delivered them.

| Date | Subject | Lecturer | Attendance |
|---------|--|----------------------------------|------------|
| Jan. 22 | A Trip Across Canada—English | Dr. F. D. Adams, Illus. . . . | 366 |
| Jan. 29 | What I Want for Canada—English | Rev. F. W. Kerr. | 197 |
| " 31 | A Trip to Japan—English | Dr. F. D. Adams, Illus. . . . | 390 |
| Feb. 7 | Gold Mining in Canada—French | Prof. Maillot, Illus. | 250 |
| " 14 | Heroes of America 16th & 17th Century—French | Princ. Desrosiers, Illus. . . . | 214 |
| " 16 | Liquid Air and Its Marvels—English | Prof. H. E. Reilley, Illus. . . | 198 |
| " 20 | A Trip to the West Indies—English | R. L. Charlton, Illus. | 196 |
| " 22 | The Story of Montreal—English | Pemberton Smith. | 112 |
| " 26 | The War with the Indians—French | Prin. Desrosiers, Illus. | 361 |
| Mar. 2 | Czecho-Slovakia—English | D. J. Van Bommel, Illus. . . . | 372 |
| " 5 | Geology—French | Prof. Maillot, Illus. | 139 |
| " 6 | Gold Mining and Gold Panning | Dr. F. D. Adams, Illus. . . . | 122 |
| " 12 | The War with the English and Indians—French | Prin. Desrosiers, Illus. | 273 |
| " 14 | Flying Machines—English | Prof. A. S. Eve, Illus. | 195 |
| " 27 | The Olympic Games and Their Origin—English | Dr. A. S. Lamb, Illus. | 629 |
| " 29 | The Mounted Police in the Arctic | Major Harwood Steele. . . . | 249 |
| " 30 | X-Rays—English | Prof. H. E. Reilley, Illus. . . | 253 |

These lectures were highly appreciated by the men and listened to with close attention. The Committee are of the opinion that this form of educational work should be continued in future years.

As has been already mentioned, the cost of the educational work was defrayed by a grant from the Andrews Home of the Anglican Church.

The Library and Reading Room

The cost of the maintenance of this department of the Shelter's work was defrayed by a grant from the United Church of Canada, and it was conducted under the Chairmanship of Dr. W. A. Gifford. Considered from the standpoint of the number of men who made use of it, the Library and Reading Room was one of the most important educational influences in the Shelter.

Owing to the decreased attendance at the Shelter during the past winter as compared with that of former years, only one library and one reading room was opened. Two hundred and fifty books were presented to the library during the year, which now contains about 2,000 volumes. These embrace books on the general fields of Travel, History, Biography and Fiction, as well as Encyclopedias and other works of reference which are frequently consulted by the men. Most of the books were in the English or French languages, but the library also contained a few works in German, Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, Polish, Finnish, Italian and Spanish. A relatively greater number of books as compared with magazines were read during the past winter than in former years, probably due to the fact that the Catalogue of the books in the library had been typewritten and posted in the Reading Room, so that the men might know what books were in the library and select works on subjects in which they were interested. In addition to these books, the library contained a large selection of magazines. About 15,000 of these were presented to the Shelter during the winter. Those which were not needed were handed over to the "Prisoners' Aid Society," the "Red Cross," the "Better 'Ole," the "Rosemount Community Centre" and other institutions which required them.

The Reading Room was always crowded, in fact, overcrowded, and the magazines were always in demand. One man was a diligent reader of what he always referred to as the "Ulcerated London News." In a good many cases, the men soon turned to the better class Fiction. One of them read "Les Miserables" through three times during the winter. Another old gentleman, "75 years young," renewed the thrills of his youth by reading a "Western" every day.

Copies of the daily papers were available on racks, the *Star*, *Gazette*, *Herald*, *La Presse*, *Le Canada*, *The Standard*, *le Samedi* and *le Film* being supplied free of charge by the firms publishing them.

In the Reading Room two tables were reserved exclusively for the use of letter writers. Paper and envelopes, with pens and ink, were provided, and the letters when written were handed in to the Library, where they were stamped and mailed. Among these letters were many addressed to Great Britain, Ireland, Isle of Man, Germany, Austria, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Belgium, Switzerland, Russia, Slavia, Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, Roumania, Hungary, Spain, Italy, Argentina, Peru, Bermuda.

In the sixteen weeks during which the Library was operated, 3,444 letters were mailed. The postage for these amounted to \$115, the average amount of postage per letter being approximately $3\frac{1}{4}$ cents.

Recreation in the Shelter

Again this year provision was made for the men to occupy their time, when not otherwise engaged, in various forms of recreation. Cards and checkers were played continuously. Picture puzzles were in great demand and some of the men played chess and dominoes. Bridge tournaments and competitions in many of the other games were arranged. There were large entries for these, and they aroused intense interest and enthusiasm. One tournament in "French Checkers" lasted sixteen days, the prize being a ten cent package of tobacco, of which the winner was very proud. A man could obtain from the staff representative in any of the game rooms a pack of cards, chess board, etc., which was returned when the games were completed. The following are the number of times these were supplied during the course of the winter:

| | | | | | |
|----------|--------|----------|-------|-----------------|--------|
| Cards | 49,124 | Cribbage | 4,908 | Dominoes | 100 |
| Checkers | 25,048 | Chess | 1,830 | Jig Saw Puzzles | 27,038 |

A change was made this winter in the conduct of the Theatre. No staff was employed to give entertainments. Such theatrical entertainments as were given were arranged by the men themselves and the performers were men in the Shelter who volunteered their services. A number of professional and amateur organizations in the city also gave performances, and a number of band concerts were given by the bands of the Royal Highlanders of Canada, the Victoria Rifles, the Salvation Army and by the band of the Tramways Company. In all there were 36 concerts or other entertainments provided, with an aggregate attendance of 22,324 men. The total cost of these to the Day Shelter was \$14.35 for the whole winter, and the Hall was in every case crowded to its capacity by an enthusiastic and delighted audience.

Departments of Work

Boot and Shoe Repairing Department

This excellent and most necessary work was supported by the Lions Club, to whom the Committee and the men of the Shelter desire to express their most sincere thanks. Larger quarters were provided this winter, two cobblers were employed instead of one and the work was reorganized and carried out even more cheaply and efficiently than last year. The Committee is indebted to the United Shoe Machinery Company for loaning a nine-foot shaft which greatly facilitated the work of the department and to the Fred Thompson Company for loaning a motor to drive this shaft.

Two thousand two hundred and thirty pairs of shoes were repaired during the winter. In addition to shoes of men in the Shelter some repairing was also carried out for the "Bureau of Office Workers" and for men at the "Better 'Ole." This service was most highly appreciated by the men, many of whom during the intense cold of last winter would otherwise have gone almost barefooted.

Clothes Repairing Department

It was stated in the Report for the winter of 1932-33, that a clothes repairing department had been established in the Shelter. This proved to meet a great need on the part of the men and the work was continued and extended during the past winter—larger quarters being available. A qualified tailor directed and supervised the work, most of the actual sewing being done by the men themselves.

Again large supplies of cloth samples, linings, boxes of buttons of all kinds, hanks of heavy thread of various colours, together with needles of all sizes, were donated by various wholesale firms in the city.

Seven thousand one hundred and one repairs were made in the tailoring department of the Shelter last winter. The operation of this department was partly financed by the St. George's Society.

First Aid Department

The work of this Department was continued throughout the winter and proved to be a most important and necessary service. The long and continued depression had very seriously impaired the health and decreased the powers of resistance of many of the men who, as a consequence, developed many minor ailments. These were treated by J. C. Bennett, the well qualified officer in charge of the Department, while all serious cases among English-speaking men were at once sent to the Montreal General Hospital, while French-Canadians were sent to St. Luke's Hospital, the men being at once taken in and cared for. Every week numbers of poorly clothed and shod men were treated for frost bites and severe colds. A total of 6,365 men were treated at the Shelter by this Department, of whom some 200 were sent to the hospitals.

The Future of the Day Shelter

The Day Shelter, as mentioned above, has now been in operation for three winters. The completion of the work of the past winter brings to a close what may be called the first period in the history of the Shelter.

During these past three years the work was carried on in the building known as the Old St. Laurent School, facing on Vitre Street. This building is the pro-

perty of the Montreal Tramways Company and was placed at the disposal of the Committee in charge of the Shelter by the Tramways Company, free of charge. In fact the company not only made no charge for the occupancy of the building but expended a very considerable amount of money in making certain repairs necessary to put and keep the building in proper condition.

In doing so the Tramways Company has rendered a distinct service to the community. To the Company and especially to the General Manager, the Committee of the Shelter wish to express most sincere appreciation and thanks for their unfailing aid and assistance. During the coming summer, however, this structure is to be demolished, and it will be necessary to secure some other building if the Shelter is to be continued next winter.

The results of the work of the past three years has shown that the Day Shelter has supplied a real need in the community in furnishing a place where the unemployed single men without distinction of creed or language had a right to go, and where they could find shelter for the day and something useful to occupy their time. That they were kept from begging and pilfering and often from more serious offences is shown by the letters commending the work of the Shelter in the highest terms which were received from the Director of the Police Services and from the City Recorder.

While the numbers attending the Shelter will decrease as times improve, there will always be a large number of men thrown out of employment in the winter owing to the exigencies of the season, for whom some sort of Shelter should be provided and where elementary educational training can be given, which would make these men better and more useful citizens.

If a permanent building was secured, it might be possible to expand the activities of the Day Shelter in other directions as well. The Lions Club have already expressed their willingness to make provision for the training of a certain number of young men in connection with the work of the boot and shoe repairing department, of which they have been defraying the expenses.

Most of the men who throughout the winter resort to the Day Shelter have come to regard it as their home—and rough as the accommodation is—as a bright spot in their hard and dreary lives. When the Shelter closed in the middle of April the petition reproduced below was handed to the Superintendent for transmission to the bodies to whom it was addressed, and a second petition in the French language, practically identical with this, was submitted a day later. These petitions were signed in all by 442 men.

PETITION

FROM—Homeless single men using the Day Shelter for Unemployed Men,
163 Vitre Street West.

TO— The Day Shelter Committee
The Executive Committee of the City Council
All Service Clubs and public spirited citizens.

April 12, 1934

WHEREAS: The "Day Shelter" has served to take us out of the elements of the weather.

WHEREAS: We were cheered up by the service given to us.

WHEREAS: The "Day Shelter" will close its doors to us on Sunday next, and we shall not be allowed in any public or semi-public buildings.

We, the undersigned, respectfully petition you to endeavour to secure some central building where we could spend our enforced idleness without being a menace to the City, not only until the weather gets better, but inasmuch as the authorities who run the "Shelter" known as the French-Speaking Shelter have decided it is necessary to keep open all year round.

We respectfully plead with you for your help. (SIGNED)

This document which originated entirely from the men themselves has a note of real pathos. Copies of this petition have been forwarded to the Executive Committee of the City Council and will be sent to Public Service Clubs also.

It is sincerely to be hoped that provision will be made by the beginning of next winter to provide a permanent shelter for this class of unfortunate men, especially when as shown in the financial statement, such a shelter can be operated at so low a cost.

Donations

Mr. A. W. McMaster of the Day Shelter Committee again during the past winter laid the needs of the Shelter before a large number of manufacturing and business houses in Montreal and also some private persons, and received from them valuable donations in kind.

A list of these donors is given below and the thanks of the Committee is extended to them, as well as to Mr. B. W. Roberts of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, through whom a number of these donations were received.

| | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Jas. M. Aird Ltd. | Brodie & Harvie Ltd. | Canadian Pacific Railway Co. |
| Albert Soaps | J. A. Bruce & Co. | Canadian Transfer Co. |
| Henry Birks & Sons | Budge Carbon Paper Co. | Carters Ink |
| Bon Ami Co. | Canadian Buttons Co. | Central Agency |
| C. E. Box Co. Ltd. | Canadian Envelopes | Coca Cola Co. |
| Brandram Henderson | Canadian Laco Lamps Ltd. | R. Charlebois |

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Clothing Bureau | Lymans Ltd. |
| Congoleum Co. of Canada Ltd. | Macdonald Tobacco Co. |
| Cotton Threads Ltd. | W. C. Macdonald Inc. |
| Crawley & McCracken | Meakins Ltd. |
| Cotton Threads Ltd. | Mechanics Institute |
| Mrs. J. Cunningham | Metropolitan Life Insurance |
| Dawson Bros. Ltd. | Mr. R. F. Minty |
| Mr. H. Diplock | Montreal General Hospital |
| Dominion Rubber Co. | Montreal Standard Publishing Co. |
| Dominion Textile Co. | Montreal Star Publishing Co. |
| D. Drysdale Ltd. | Montreal Tramways Co. |
| T. Eaton Co. Ltd. | Munderloh Co. Ltd. |
| Mark Fisher & Sons | National Drug & Chemical Co. |
| H. C. Fortier & Sons | Jas. A. Ogilvy's Ltd. |
| Frothingham, Starke Seybold Ltd. | Palmer's Ltd. |
| Gazette Publishing Co. | Parke, Davis Co. |
| Grier Timber Co. | Provincial Blank Forms |
| Greenshields Ltd. | Rubberset Co. Ltd. |
| Chas. Gurd & Co. | Jack Rubin |
| W. L. Hogg Co. | Rutherford Lumber Co. |
| Wm. M. Hall & Co. | Mr. C. C. Russell |
| Harrison Bros. | Scythes & Co. Ltd. |
| Dent Harrison | Semi-Ready Tailoring |
| John Henderson & Co. | Jas. Shearer Co. Ltd. |
| Herald Publishing Co. | Sherwin-Williams Co. |
| Hodgson Sumner Ltd. | Shipping Containers Ltd. |
| Mr. Norman Holland | R. Simon |
| Frank W. Horner Ltd. | Simms Ltd. |
| Hygiene Products Ltd. | S. S. Sims & Co. |
| Imperial Tobacco Co. | Harold E. Smith Co. Ltd. |
| International Paint Co. | The Solex Co. Ltd. |
| R. C. Jameson Paint Co. | Southam Press |
| Johnson & Johnson | Standard Chemicals |
| La Patrie | Jas. Strachan |
| La Presse | Tooke Bros. Ltd. |
| Le Petit Journal | United Shoe Machinery Co. Ltd. |
| Le Samedi Publishing Co. | Miss A. Van Horne |
| Lewis Bros. | The Jas. Walker Hardware Co. Ltd. |
| Libraire Beauchemin Ltd. | Mark Workman |
| John Lovell & Sons Ltd. | |

The total value of the donations reaches a sum of about \$1,700. The Committee desire to mention especially a donation of 3,000 packages of tobacco from the Macdonald Tobacco Company, which made it possible to present a package of tobacco to every man in the Shelter on Christmas Day.

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS FOR 1933-1934

RECEIPTS

| | | |
|--|------------|-------------------|
| Cash in Bank May 25, 1933..... | | \$23.06 |
| Unemployment Relief Commission..... | \$5,020.92 | |
| The Andrews Home..... | 1,000.00 | |
| United Church of Canada (Library Subscriptions) | 685.00 | |
| Parks and Playgrounds Association..... | 300.00 | |
| Lions Club of Montreal (Shoe Repair)..... | 151.56 | |
| Private Subscriptions..... | 70.00 | |
| St. George's Society account Clothing Repair..... | 50.00 | |
| Synod Diocese of Montreal (Balance 1932-1933)..... | 50.00 | 7,327.48 |
| <hr/> | | |
| Sale of Magazines and Papers..... | | 24.15 |
| <hr/> | | |
| | | <u>\$7,374.69</u> |

DISBURSEMENTS

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Salaries and Wages:— | | | |
| General | \$2,460.72 | Cleaners | \$349.70... \$2,810.42 |
| Library | 626.35 | Educational | 521.44... 1,147.79 |
| Clothing | 78.75 | Shoe Repair | 149.81... 228.56 |
| <hr/> | | | |
| General Expenses:— | | | |
| Cleaning Department..... | | | \$340.58 |
| Supplies | \$49.76 | Hardware | \$94.54... 144.30 |
| Library: Postage | 115.00 | Sundry | 9.75... 124.75 |
| Educational..... | | | 43.28 |
| Clothing Repair..... | | | 15.28 |
| Shoe Repair..... | | | 1.75 |
| Theatre and Amusements..... | | | 14.35 |
| “ (Outstanding from 1932-33) | | | 30.00 |
| Telephone | \$42.46 | Lighting | \$437.18... 479.64 |
| Coal..... | | | 1,129.25 |
| Insurance..... | | | 93.68 |
| Printing | \$168.75 | Postage | \$28.09... 196.84 |
| Moving and Transportation..... | | | 53.85 |
| General Expenses..... | | | 97.21 |
| <hr/> | | | |
| Cash in Bank June 22, 1934..... | | | 423.16 |
| <hr/> | | | |
| | | | <u>\$7,374.69</u> |

Audited and Verified:—

RUTHERFORD, MOLSON, WILLIAMSON & CUSHING,
Chartered AccountantsALLAN MACDUFF,
Hon. Treasurer.

File Copy - Not to be taken away.

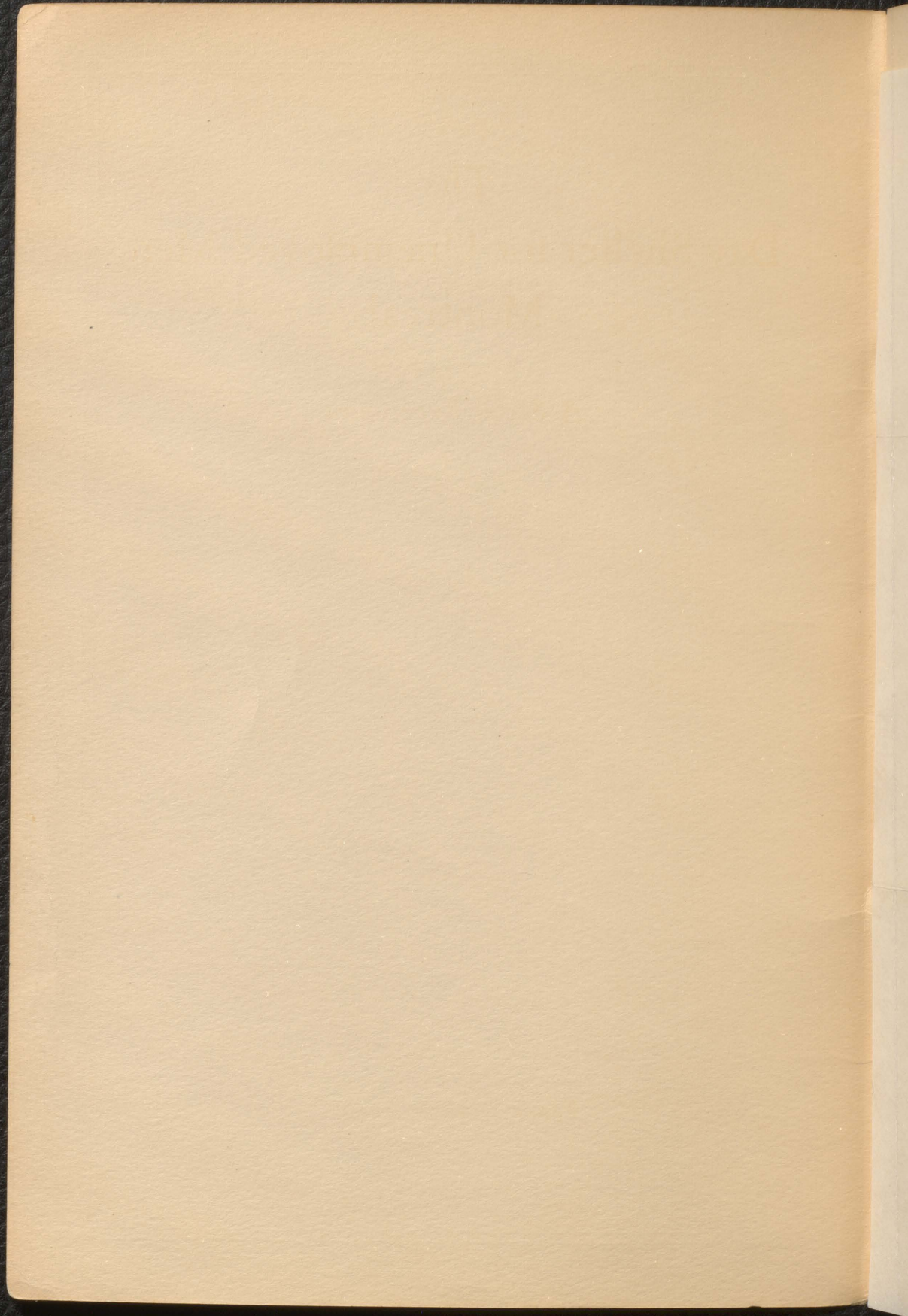
MONTREAL PARKS
& PLAYGROUNDS ASS'N INC.
Room 205 - 1421 Atwater Avenue, MONTREAL

The
Day Shelter for Unemployed Men
Montreal

A Social Experiment

∴

FRANK DAWSON ADAMS
MCGILL UNIVERSITY



The
Day Shelter for Unemployed Men

OF TOWN TO BE FURNISHED -- November 25th, 1916

To be done on the Day Shelter for Unemployed Men -- Norfolk

1916-17
1916-17
1917-18

Mr. J. P. Donohue, Jr.,
Secretary of the
Norfolk Day Shelter Association
Norfolk, Va.

TO --

(Signed)

Received by

[Handwritten signature]

November 19th, 1916

FRANK DUNSON ADAMS
MAY 1917

From SOS, 1st Street, Norfolk, Va.
NORFOLK DAY SHELTER AND FLYING BOARDS ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

MONTREAL PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED
Room 205, 1421 Atwater Avenue, Montreal 25.

November 19th, 1946

TO -

MRS. CAMPBELL,
FAMILY WELFARE ASSOCIATION
1646 Dorchester St. West,
Montreal.

- FILE COPIES -

To Reports on "The Day Shelter for Unemployed Men - Montreal"
1931-32
1932-33
1933-34

ON LOAN TO BE RETURNED - November 26th, 1946

Received by

(Signed)

L. Campbell

The
Day Shelter for Unemployed Men
Montreal

A Social Experiment



FRANK DAWSON ADAMS
MCGILL UNIVERSITY

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BY
FRANK DAWSON ADAMS

The Day Shelter for Unemployed Men Montreal

A SOCIAL EXPERIMENT

By

FRANK DAWSON ADAMS

Origin and History

As the Day Shelter for Unemployed Men in Montreal represents what is practically a new departure among the many attempts to meet the unemployment situation in North America and one which has attracted widespread attention and interest on the part of social workers, the present brief description of the Shelter and the work which was carried on in it during the winter of 1931 and 1932 has been prepared. Perhaps other communities faced with similar problems may wish to know how this one has been attacked in this city and what measure of success has been achieved in the attempt to solve it. So far as it has been possible to ascertain, Philadelphia is the only city in North America which is carrying on a similar work, although there this is on a much smaller scale and presents certain differences.

During the recent years of serious depression, provision has been made in Montreal through various agencies to supply food, clothing and sleeping accommodation for the unemployed. The cost of this has been defrayed in some cases by government or municipal grants, as in that of the Refuge operated by the Montreal Relief Committee, which is quite distinct from the Day Shelter for Unemployed Men, although both institutions are on Vitre Street. Other agencies are supported by endowments or by private subscriptions.

Still other agencies have undertaken—so far as the means at their disposal permitted—the care of special classes of the unemployed, e.g.—families, unemployed women, office workers, etc.

While the unemployed single men in Montreal have been provided with beds and meals in certain refuges, most of these institutions are obliged to turn the men out into the street each morning as soon as they have had their breakfast in order that the buildings may be swept, fumigated, etc., and set in order for the succeeding night. Accordingly all last winter the unemployed single men—which is the class with which the Day Shelter deals—although as a general

rule but poorly clothed, were turned out into the streets even in the coldest weather and were obliged to shift for themselves all day as best they might. They naturally sought shelter wherever it could be secured, in the waiting rooms of the Railway Stations, in Public Libraries, in shops, or in any covered places on the streets. They were naturally in the way wherever they went and were, in consequence, continually "moved on" and cheived about by the police.

The great majority of these men were out of work through no fault of their own, they could not get work because there was no work to be had. Such being the case, the harsh conditions under which they found themselves naturally led to a sense of ill treatment and resentment and, in the case of some of them, to attempts to better their condition through various criminal acts.

Early in the Fall of 1931, Captain William Bowie, Executive Secretary of the Montreal Parks and Playgrounds Association, inaugurated a movement to bring this undesirable state of affairs to a close by the provision of some place where the unemployed single men in the city might go during the daytime, when denied access to the buildings where they slept and had their meals. On looking about the city for some unoccupied building which might be obtained for this purpose, he found that the old St. Laurent School was the one that would be most suitable if it could be secured. This building occupies an entire city block in a poor part of the business portion of the city, facing on Vitre Street and being bounded on the other three sides by Chenneville, Cote and Lagauchetiere Streets. The building itself is a low structure, varying from two to four stories in height, running around the four sides of the square with an open space, formerly the playground of the school, in the centre.

Two hundred and fifty years ago this part of Montreal presented a very different appearance to that which it now exhibits. In 1702 Paul Le Moyne de Maricourt, who was born in Ville Marie (Montreal) in 1663, a son of Charles Le Moyne and a brother of the first Baron de Longueuil, built here a mansion which he named "Près-de-Ville." It stood in a fine property which was much admired, and which was planted with lovely gardens. These extended down to the bank of a little stream which took its rise in a small lake occupying the present site of the Place Viger and which flowed down what is now Craig Street to Victoria Square and thence by McGill Street to the St. Lawrence. At the foot of this property there was a bridge thrown over the stream. On the other side of the stream, about half way up the slope rising to the present location of the Bank of Montreal and the Royal Trust, was the wooden palisade built in 1685 by Governor M. de Callière to protect Montreal from the raids of the Iroquois and of the English living in the State of New York. This palisade was at the time in question out of repair and was replaced in 1716 by a stone wall, which, like the palisade, followed what is now the course of Fortification Lane. One of the old plans shows "Près-de-Ville" and next to it another building marked "Ecole des Frères de la Doctrine Chretienne." Both were built of stone. The old

St. Laurent School building occupied by the Shelter stands on the site of these ancient and historic buildings whose memory carries us back to a time only sixty years after the foundation of the City of Montreal by the Sieur de Maisonneuve, which took place in the year 1642. The rest of the building is of much later date and of inferior construction.

The property was bought some years ago by the Montreal Tramways Company to be used later in the extension of their plant, but the buildings were unoccupied last Fall.

The Management of the Company, being ready to do anything in its power to alleviate the distress caused by the prevailing unemployment, when approached at once gave its consent to the proposal that the building should be used during the winter as a Shelter for Unemployed Men and also signified its readiness to put the building in good order for that purpose and proceeded to do so at a cost of approximately \$1200. This action of the Montreal Tramways Company is worthy of the highest commendation and may well serve as an example to large corporations in other cities, many of whom have unused buildings at their disposal which might be employed for a similar purpose.

A building admirably suited for the needs of the work having thus been secured, a Committee for the organization and conduct of the Shelter was brought into being under the auspices of the Council of Social Agencies of Montreal. The personnel of this was as follows:—

Executive Committee

Dr. Frank D. Adams, *Chairman*; Geo. S. Mooney, *Vice-Chairman*; Father Jos. Fallon, Dr. Frank Pedley, Carl Ruckman, Rabbi H. Stern, Arthur W. McMaster. *Chairmen of Committees*—*House*, C. H. Colson; *Library*, Dr. W. A. Gifford; *Physical Activities*, W. F. Shepherd; *Education*, Rev. G. Guiton; *Foreign Department*, D. J. Van Bommel. A. Stanley Rough, *Superintendent*; T. Morley Ewing, *Assistant Superintendent*; W. F. Shepherd, *Assistant Treasurer*; William Bowie, *Secretary*,

It was decided that the building should be officially designated as the *Day Shelter for Unemployed Men*.

Development of the Work

The Shelter was opened on October 27, 1931, and closed on April 29, 1932.

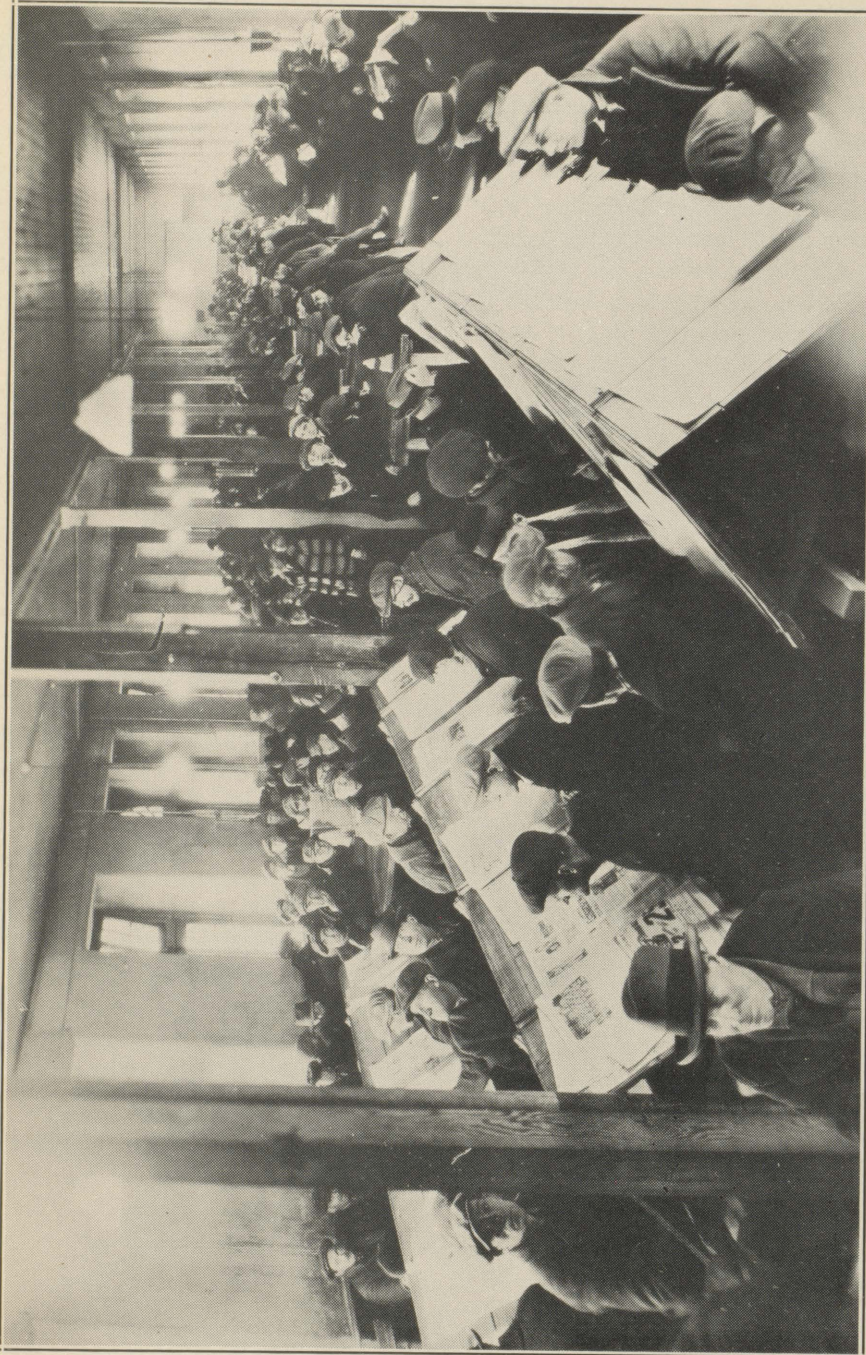
Not knowing how many men would avail themselves of the accommodation afforded by the Shelter, the Committee decided first to open up only that portion of the building facing on Vitre Street, which embraced approximately one-quarter of the space available. Lumber was obtained by gift, or purchased at a low price from benevolently-minded lumber firms, a number of carpenters were secured from among the ranks of the unemployed men and several hundred rough tables and benches were made by them. The partitions on the first and second floors

of the building were torn out and one very long and well lighted room was thus secured on each floor. From the lower room, an entrance hall, no larger than necessary, was cut off from one end, having a long counter opposite the door behind which the Superintendent and his assistants took up their position. The necessary sanitary arrangements were installed in a space cut off from the other end. This long room was then furnished with tables and benches which afforded seating accommodation for some five hundred men. Checker boards were stencilled on the planed surface of some of these tables, while the others were left blank. An elevated desk was placed at one end of the room, at which there was stationed a reliable man, also selected from the crowd of the unemployed. He was supplied with a large number of packs of cards and boxes of checkers. Any man could obtain a pack of cards or a box of checkers by depositing at this desk his entrance card, which was returned to him when he brought back the cards or checkers. This man had general charge of this room and reported to the Superintendent any irregularities or breaches of the regulations.

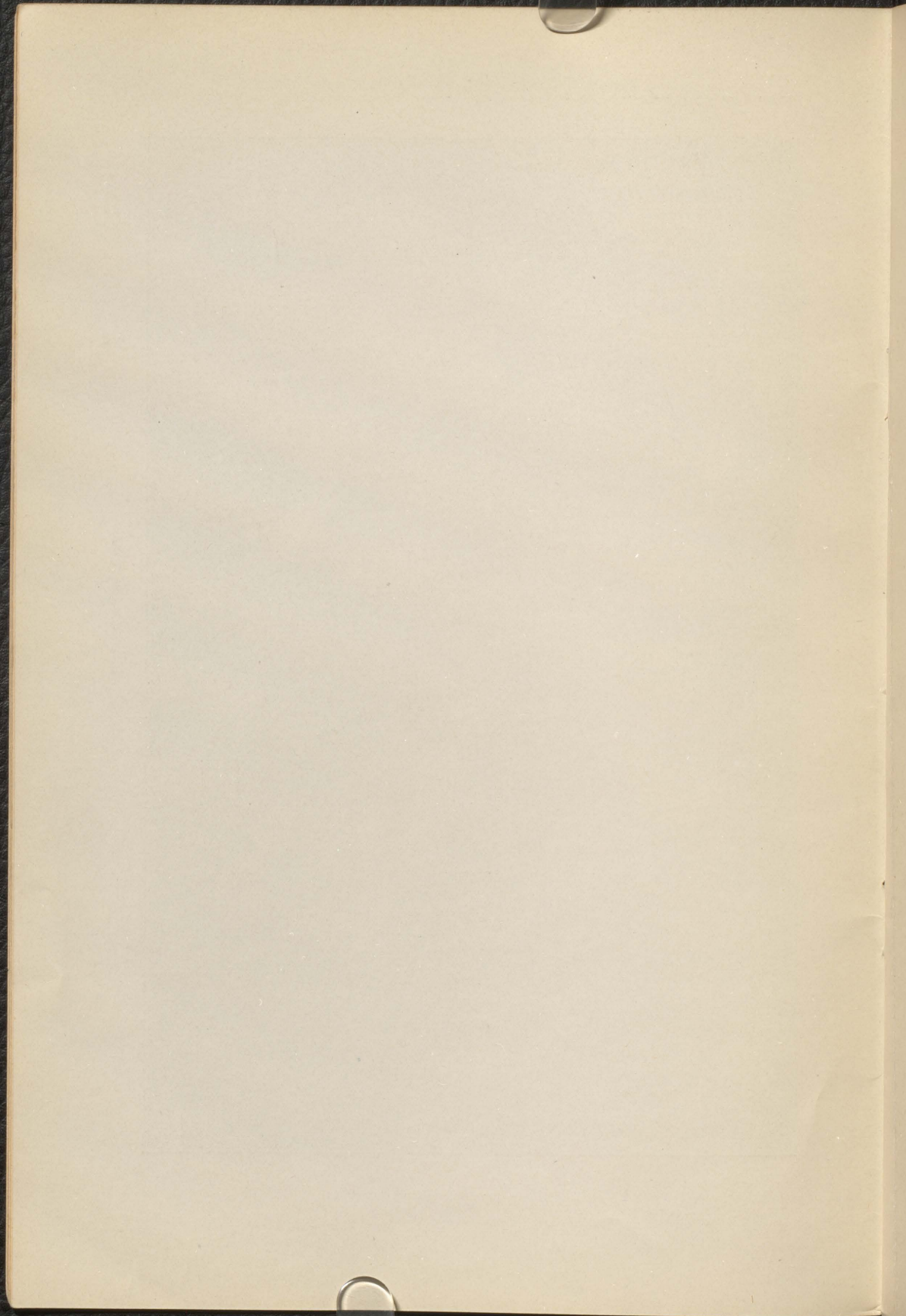
The second floor was arranged as a library and reading room. A small portion cut off at one end and provided with the necessary shelving, accommodated the Librarian and the books and magazines under his charge. The rest of the room was furnished with tables and desks at which the men could sit down and read the books and magazines which they could obtain from the Librarian or his assistants, or they could read the daily papers, a certain number of copies of which were supplied gratis by their respective publishers. There were also special tables at which the men could write letters; pen, ink, paper and postage stamps being supplied by the Shelter.

The third or top floor of this part of the building had been fitted up as a theatre or concert hall by the authorities of the school. This was, however, in a very dilapidated condition. It was noticed that so soon as the men came to know something of one another a few days after the opening of the Shelter, small groups commenced to give little amateur performances in some of the rooms. It was accordingly decided to open this old concert hall. It was cleaned out and furnished with benches like those in the rooms below. The services of several graduates and students of the Department of Architecture of McGill University were enlisted and these gentlemen painted new scenery and decorations for the stage, and in the course of a few days the hall was ready for use. It had a seating capacity for 650 persons and was crowded every day from the time that it was opened.

Within a few days of the opening, the first "wing" of the Shelter became congested, from 3000 to 3500 men entering it every day. There was not seating accommodation for more than 60 per cent of them. The rest walked about in the passages, sat on the window ledges or hot water pipes, so that it was almost impossible to get through the crowd, or get about in the building. It was evidently "meeting a long felt need."



One of the Reading Rooms



The Committee at once cleared out the second section of the building, that facing on Chenneville Street. This was two stories high. The lower flat consisted of a single enormous room, which was furnished for playing cards and checkers, duplicating in every respect that just described in Vitre Street wing. In the same way the second floor was equipped as a second great reading room with its papers, magazines and books. This relieved the congestion for a couple of weeks longer but the numbers entering the Shelter increased continuously and it soon became evident that it would be necessary to take occupation of the third section of the building, that facing Lagauchetiere Street. This was also a two storied building. The lower floor here was also arranged for cards and checkers, while the upper floor was subdivided into four large rooms, three of these being set aside for the accommodation of the educational work which the Committee had decided to inaugurate, while the fourth was used as a dormitory for the working staff of the Shelter, it having been found advisable to provide sleeping accommodation for these men in the Shelter itself. These three sides of the building were found to supply all the accommodation required, so that the fourth side was left unoccupied.

Number of Men Using the Shelter and Their Racial Affinities

It was impossible without resorting to a complicated system of registration to determine the actual number of individual men who made use of the Shelter. It was, however, easy to determine the number of men who entered the building each day and this was done at frequent intervals.

The Shelter was opened on October 28, 1931, and during the first few days the number entering averaged daily about 2000. These numbers however rapidly increased, the average daily entry during the first month being 3966. By the third week of February the daily average was 10,614. In the first week of March it had fallen to 8,514. On Wednesday, March 9, the millionth man entered the Shelter. These numbers however give an exaggerated idea of the actual number of men using the Shelter, for the same man often entered the building more than once on the same day. It is probable that the number of individual men who made use of the Shelter on any one day was not over 5000.

The men who used the Shelter may be arranged as to race in three classes—French-Canadians, English-speaking men and foreigners from various European countries. A detailed registration of these nationalities was not attempted since this was kept by the Montreal Relief Committee at their Emergency Relief Centre on Vitre Street, the men from which generally spent the day in the Day Shelter for Unemployed Men.

The total registration at this Relief Centre from August 10, 1931, when it was opened until March 1, 1932, for which data the writer is indebted to Mr.

W. A. Irwin, Assistant Manager of the Montreal Relief Committee, was as follows:—

Montreal Relief Committee Nationality Figures.

Total Registrations from August 10, 1931, to February 29, 1932

| | | |
|----------------------------|------|--|
| French Canadian | 6869 | 35.93 p.c. |
| English Canadian | 3499 | 18.30 p.c. |
| British | 3005 | 15.72 p.c. |
| U.S.A. | 113 | |
| Germany | 170 | |
| Poland | 563 | |
| Roumania | 102 | |
| Finland | 819 | |
| Hungary | 826 | |
| Czecho-Slovakia | 1295 | |
| France | 23 | |
| Denmark | 83 | |
| Holland | 17 | |
| Jugo Slavia | 233 | |
| Ukranian | 866 | |
| Sweden | 118 | |
| Lethunia | 95 | |
| Russia | 90 | |
| Norway | 124 | } 744 30.04 p.c. (32 Nationalities) |
| Bulgaria | 105 | |
| Austria | 26 | |
| Switzerland | 32 | |
| Esthonia | 9 | |
| Belgium | 12 | |
| Spain | 10 | |
| Latvia | 5 | |
| Syria | 1 | |
| Japan | 3 | |
| Luxemburg | 1 | |
| China | 2 | |
| Italy | 85 | |
| Argentine | 1 | |
| Greece | 5 | |
| Armenia | 2 | |
| Turkey | 3 | |

19,117

99.99

As will be noted, French Canadians, English speaking men and Foreigners each constitute almost exactly one-third of the total number—English speaking Canadians being only 18.30 p.c. of the whole.

No less than 32 nations are represented among these foreigners, but two-thirds of these foreigners come from four countries—namely Czecho-Slovakia, Finland, Hungary and Ukrania.

An enumeration of the first 2500 entering the Day Shelter on the morning of February 23, was made to ascertain the number who spoke French, English and other languages respectively. This gave the following result:

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------|
| French Canadians | 49 p.c. |
| English speaking men | 29 p.c. |
| Foreigners | 22 p.c. |

This shows a rather larger proportion of French Canadians and smaller number of foreigners than in the table given above, which may be due in part to the presence in the Shelter of a number of French Canadian unemployed who do not take their meals and sleep at the Montreal Relief Committee Centre, but who reside in their own lodgings or homes and come to the Shelter for the day.

McGill University having undertaken, through Professor Marsh and his assistants, a comprehensive study of the whole problem of unemployment in Canada, and more especially in the district about Montreal, the officers of the Shelter, and more particularly Mr. Ewing, the Assistant Superintendent, have, it is believed, afforded valuable aid to the University in obtaining the life histories of several hundred of the men in the Shelter with a view to securing accurate data concerning the causes of unemployment in their respective cases, as typical of those of the various classes of men who make up the ranks of the unemployed in Eastern Canada at the present time.

Activities in the Shelter

When an enormous number of men such as this are brought together it is necessary to provide something which will occupy their time—their “enforced leisure,” it might perhaps be called. “Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do” and he should never be allowed to have any more leeway than necessary.

Cards and checkers were, therefore, as has been mentioned, provided for those who wished to employ their time in this way, while books, magazines and the daily papers were furnished to those who desired to read, and a concert hall was equipped. Gramophones were also installed in several of the rooms to provide what the men considered to be a more cheerful atmosphere. An appeal issued through the public press resulted in the sending in to the Shelter, by well wishers throughout the city, 3000 packs of used cards, 60,000 magazines, 1000 gramophone records and 8 gramophones.

The card and checker rooms were crowded with players throughout the entire winter. More "Rummy" was probably played here than in all the rest of Montreal put together and they found it quite possible to play without "points." Every day on an average about 2600 packs of cards and 1600 boxes of checkers were given out.

The reading rooms were also continuously filled. There is no reading room in Montreal and probably none in Canada where so many people read every day. There were days on which as many as 950 readers were in the reading rooms at one time. The daily papers were regularly perused, while as time went on the books were ever in greater demand. The magazines, however—as with the general public everywhere—were chiefly desired, although only the better class of magazines were given out. While most of the reading matter was printed in English, a full supply of good French books and magazines were also available, as well as others in Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, Polish, Yiddish, German and Italian.

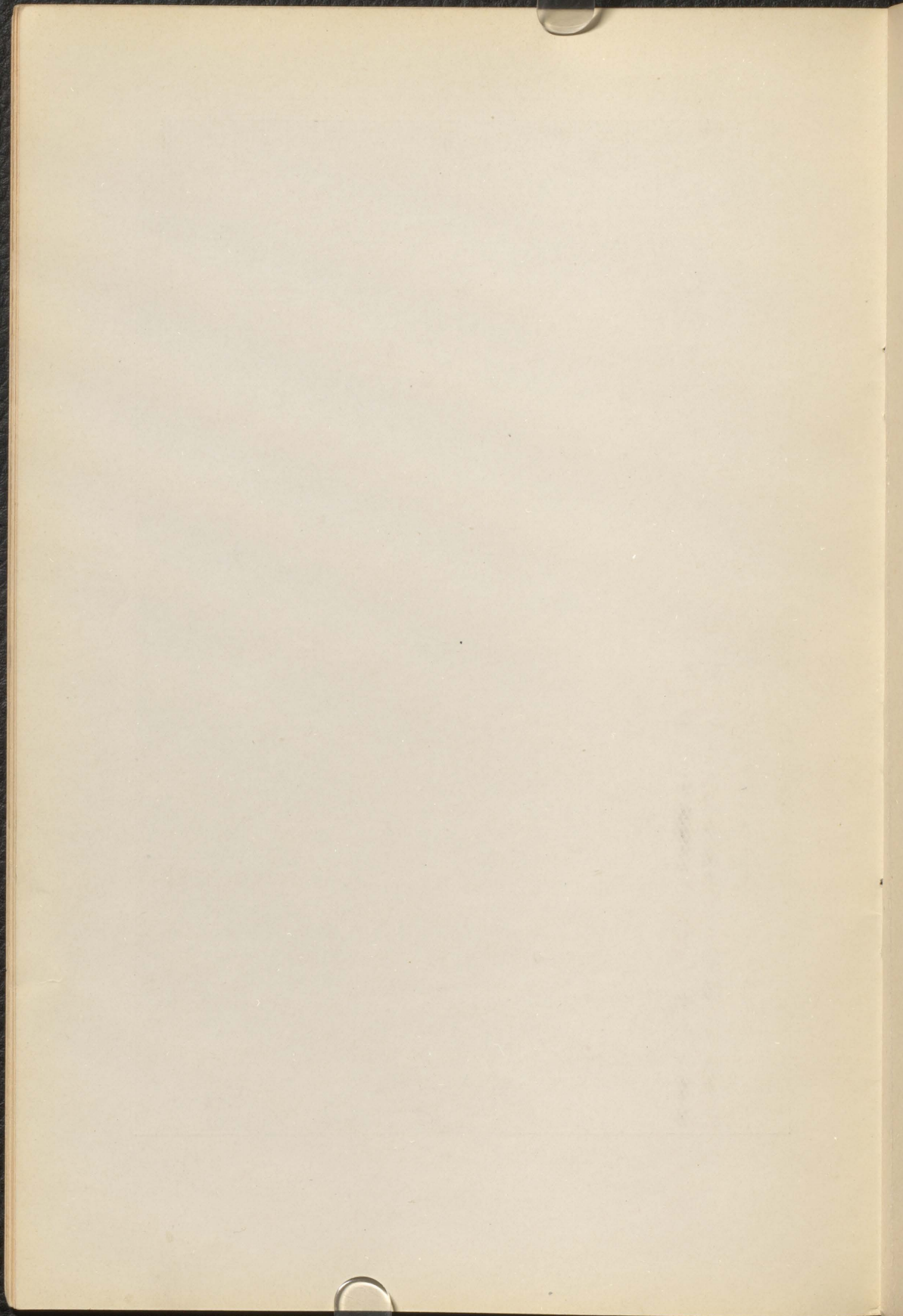
The library had approximately two thousand volumes on its shelves. While a number of the men read really good literature, books of adventure and detective stories, here as in most other places, were especially sought. On an average about 2200 books and magazines were issued to readers each day and returned in the evening.

Writing paper and envelopes were also provided in the reading rooms and special tables set aside for men who wished to write. Twelve hundred letters were written by the men each month, the postage being provided from the funds of the Shelter.

In the Theatre or Concert Hall, which, as has been mentioned, occupied the upper floor of the portion of the building facing on Vitre Street, a continuous performance was given every week-day from 3 p.m. till 5 p.m. This consisted of short plays and sketches, songs (in which the audience frequently were invited to join), dances and various other "items" such as are to be seen on the vaudeville stage. Many of these were distinctly clever and amusing and all the performers were drawn from the men themselves. The tap dancing was especially good. The female parts were taken by the men, who attired themselves according to their conception of the latest fashions, strict decorum however being always observed. The stage with a group of actors is shown in one of the accompanying photographs. The "ladies" on one occasion entered themselves for a "beauty competition" in which the prize was awarded to the competitor receiving the loudest round of applause from the audience. The hall, as has been mentioned, had seating capacity for 650 persons and tickets for each performance were issued at the office to the first 650 men who applied for them—a special entrance to this hall was opened up from the front of the building to prevent the confusion which would be caused by men passing through the building itself. A queue of men entering the hall is shown in another of the photographs. On three or four



One of the Rooms for Cards and Checkers



occasions each week the Superintendent spoke briefly to the men or led them in community singing. On Sunday afternoon a Concert was always given by persons not connected with the Shelter. This consisted largely of sacred music or at least of a more serious type of music than that presented during the week days. In some cases the whole programme consisted of classical music which was apparently appreciated by the men, who at least listened to it quietly and attentively.

The Shelter also had a vocal quartet and orchestra, the members of both of these organizations being drawn from the unemployed men coming to the Shelter. The former not only sang frequently in the Shelter itself but also with marked acceptance to a great congregation in St. James United Church one Sunday evening and subsequently before one of the Service Clubs of the city.

Christmas Day was observed with special festivities—the building was decorated throughout and a package of tobacco was presented to every man. Until the snow fell the central playground was, throughout the entire day, filled with men playing football, baseball or quoits. When the cold weather set in, it was intended to flood an old skating rink on this playground, but in attempting to do so it was found that its substructure was in bad repair so that the water drained into the cellars of the building. It was therefore necessary to give up this undertaking.

With the coming of the Spring, however, and the disappearance of the snow, the theatre was closed and the men again reverted to the playground. Early one morning a large gang of men was busy raking it over, removing all the refuse which had accumulated during the winter, and filling in the damp hollows with sawdust and ashes. A series of baseball matches were then arranged between teams made up of the men themselves and these were watched by an enthusiastic audience of some seven hundred men who could find standing room around the sides of the playground, while a host of others viewed the progress of the games from the windows and galleries of the building. The policeman was one of the star players. This particular series culminated in a most exciting contest between two teams, one drawn from the staff and the other from the men. There were seven innings and the playground rang with yells and whoops that in the days of *Maisonneuve* would have struck terror into the hearts of the citizens of *Ville Marie*, but these came not from painted savages but from the audience just mentioned, acclaiming the victory of "The World" over "The Staff" by a score of thirty-three to sixteen.

Educational Classes

So soon as the various activities referred to above were running smoothly, the Committee turned its attention to providing educational classes for any men who desired to employ their time in acquiring knowledge which would be of advantage to them in fitting them for better positions than those which they had held in the past, so soon as conditions of employment again improved.

Competent teachers were secured and classes were started in the following subjects:—

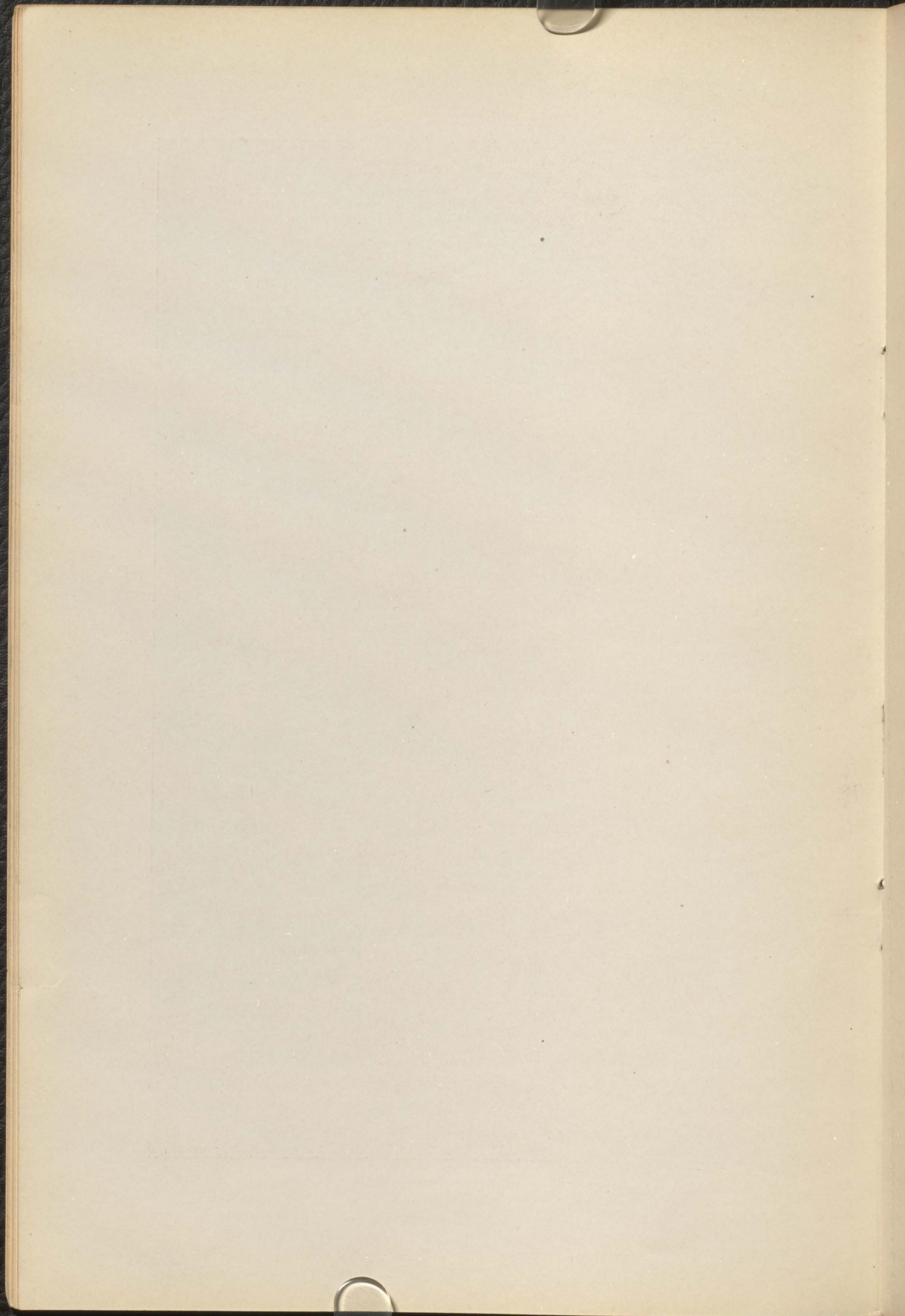
English for Foreigners
French—elementary and advanced
Elementary Bookkeeping
Arithmetic
Shorthand
Automotive Engineering

The men were urged to enter these classes but it was found—as might be expected—that the great majority did not care to do so. They shrugged their shoulders and said “What’s the good?” The Committee then offered to start classes in any other subjects in which they were interested, but no requests were forthcoming. About seven hundred and fifty did enter their names for one or other of the courses of study listed above—most of these however came once or twice and then dropped out. Some two hundred however joined the educational classes and attended regularly until the classes closed on April 1st. They were closed on this date because by that time most of these men—being the most intelligent men in the Shelter—had obtained work and arrangements were made for the few that remained to continue their educational courses in various other institutions. It is interesting to note—as a piece of social information—that in this great body of men, representing the unemployed single men thrown out of employment in a time of great economic depression in the City of Montreal, only about five per cent were desirous of obtaining a better education and willing to make the sustained mental effort which would be required to do so.

In this connection, however, it should be remembered that these are, for the most part, the lowest, poorest and most unprogressive part of the community and that such being the case, while they were not seekers after knowledge, their quiet and excellent deportment in the Shelter during the winter shows that they are a part of the community which, even in times of deep distress, will behave itself properly and in a law abiding manner if decently and fairly treated. The largest classes were those in Elementary English and Automotive Engineering. The former was a class attended exclusively by foreigners who in it were taught to speak English. This was one of the best and most interesting pieces of educational work carried on in the Shelter. The men had an excellent teacher and it was almost pathetic to see the keenness displayed by them to learn the language of the new country to which they had come to take up their abode. They, consequently, made surprisingly rapid progress. The class in what was termed Automotive Engineering was one in which an extended course of instruction was given on the motor car and its internal combustion engine and especially on the construction, maintenance and repair of the latter. This class had an enrolment of seventy. The men received a minimum of three hours of instruction daily. A Chevrolet car was given by Mr. E. Mildenhall and spare parts or tools



A Game of Checkers



were presented by the Ford Motor Company, the General Motors Company, Messrs. Lewis Brothers, and the Canadian Fairbanks-Morse Company. A small machine shop was established for the class, and the men were taken to hear lectures and to visit different repair shops and machine shops in the city. Many of these men thus trained were taken on by motor car companies when the Shelter closed down.

On going through the Shelter it was found that there were a number of young men of the "White Collar Class" who had already received a fair education. Some others belonged to good families and others were still mere boys. These were taken out of the Shelter and special classes were set up for them at Strathcona Hall, the home of the Student Christian Association of McGill University. This was arranged by the Rev. Mr. Guiton, who was in charge of the educational work at the Shelter, and these men were thenceforth cared for by other agencies.

Finances

As has been already stated the Montreal Tramways Company provided the building which was converted into the Day Shelter and put the building into a thorough state of repair at a cost to the Company of \$1,200.

To furnish and equip this building after it was taken over cost the Committee approximately \$1,500.

When it was furnished and equipped it cost \$1,775 per month to operate it. The largest item in the operating expenses was the salaries of some thirty-five men who constituted the staff. These ranged from \$100 a month paid to a few of the officers in the most responsible positions, to \$15 a month for the men in charge of the rooms and who were responsible for care and cleaning of the building. This item of salaries amounted to \$915 per month.

Other large items in the operating charges were fuel, light, postage and cleaning equipment.

The funds to equip and operate the Shelter were obtained from the following sources. These figures for purposes of simplicity are here stated approximately, the detailed Statement of Receipts and Disbursements follows:

| | |
|--|------------|
| From the Emergency Relief Fund provided by the Federal Government, the Provincial Government and the City..... | \$2,000.00 |
| From the Anglican Churches, chiefly for educational classes..... | 1,000.00 |
| From the United Church of Canada for the Library and Reading Room..... | 1,100.00 |
| From the Montreal Parks & Playgrounds Association—salaries..... | 1,000.00 |
| Special subscriptions from friends of the Shelter in Montreal..... | 6,922.00 |

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS
(From October 27, 1931 to April 30, 1932)

RECEIPTS:

| | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| Playgrounds Association | \$925.00 | |
| Government Grants—Dom., Prov. and City | 2,000.00 | |
| Library Donations | 1,283.00 | |
| Entertainment Donations | 250.00 | |
| Educational Donations | 750.00 | |
| General Donations | 6,922.00 | |
| | \$12,130.00 | \$12,130.00 |

DISBURSEMENTS:

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Wages | \$5,820.00 | |
| Sundries | 514.07 | |
| Lumber | 773.71 | |
| Cleaning Material, etc. | 354.48 | |
| Hardware, etc. | 431.89 | |
| Library—Stamps | 346.80 | |
| Theatre | 852.59 | |
| Other Entertainment | 150.00 | |
| Coal | 1,337.79 | |
| Meals | 112.39 | |
| Office Supplies | 51.73 | |
| Cartage, Carfare, etc. | 66.29 | |
| Tobacco (Xmas) | 98.80 | |
| Light | 469.46 | |
| Educational Work | 750.00 | |
| | \$12,130.00 | \$12,130.00 |

The Humanities

On the first day the Shelter was opened a thousand or more men came in as a cat comes into a larder when she thinks the dog may be behind the door. They strolled about suspiciously and then went out. Later they returned, the men in charge seemed to be harmless and smiled on them. They got some packs of cards and had a few games. They came back every day for a week. The thing seemed to be all right now. There was no sign that it was a place where the government was going to try to entrap them in order to send them to the Japanese War or to a camp on the shore of Hudson's Bay. That these fears were actually in their mind was confessed later by two of these men. By the end of a month all suspicions had been dispatched; the staff treated them well and were all friendly

to them, never hustled them about but always addressed them as "Gentlemen," which was a shock to them at first, but they rapidly responded to the challenge. They came and went as they liked. The Shelter became their club and they felt at home and were happy. It was a new and rather wonderful experience to most of them. They commenced to make little presents to the superintendent and members of the staff, one of their two bananas or a pipeful of habitant tobacco, and they "loosened up." Then the voices in the jungle commenced to be heard.

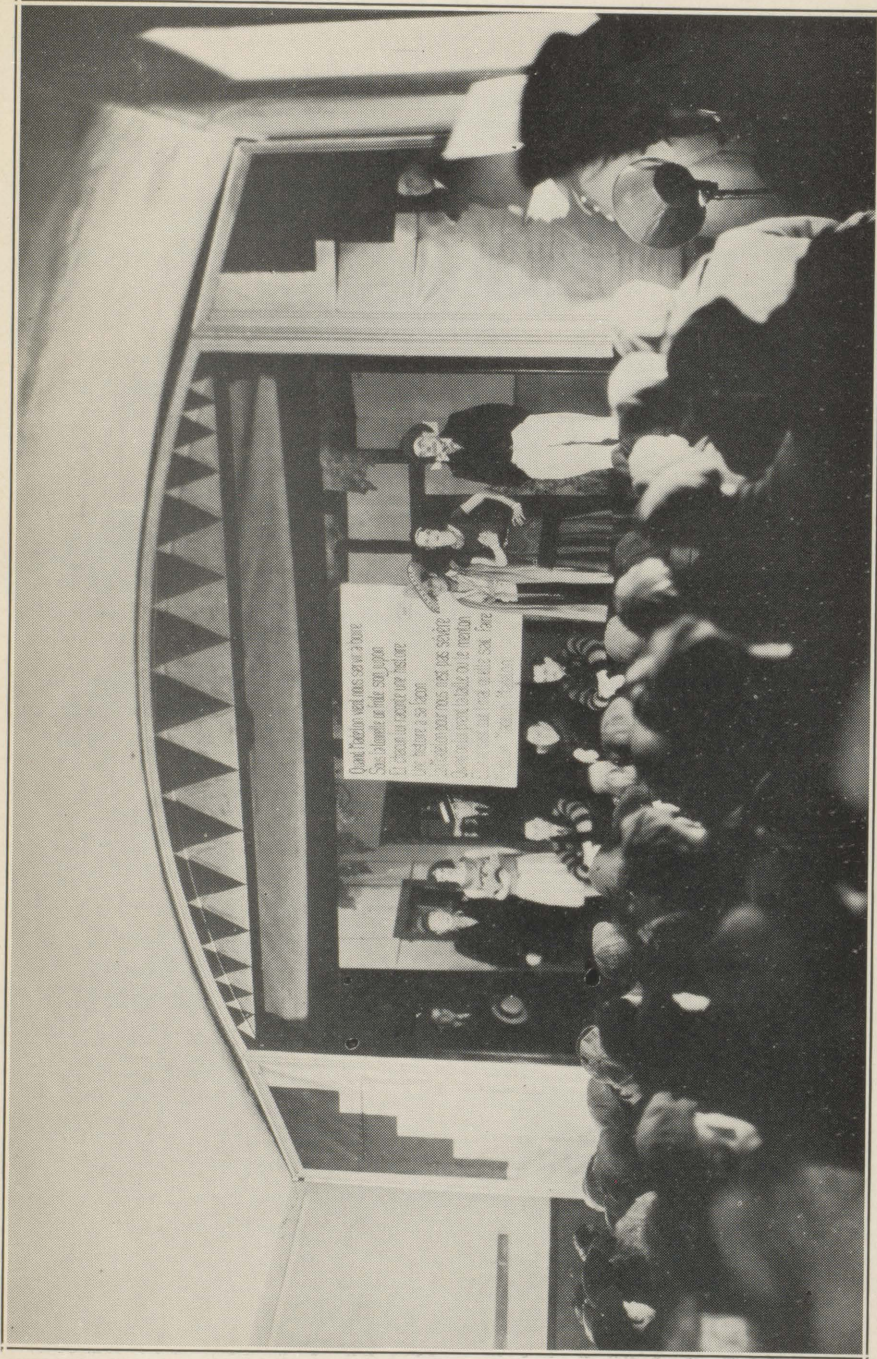
When the work of the day had got well under way the Superintendent, in his red and grey striped sweater, lighted his pipe and sauntered through the crowd. Each of the great rooms had come to take on a more or less distinct and individual character. In the card room in the third "wing" of the building the men seemed to be a rather higher type than the average. They scarcely ever looked up from their games and were evidently intent on playing as well as possible. The same men came back to this room day after day.

Passing from this into the adjacent room, that on Chenneville Street, the card and checker players are not quite so intent on their games but stop to chat from time to time. At the end of the room there is a group huddled around a small gramophone. They return every day and always listen most intently to the seraphic strains, fearful apparently lest they miss a single note. Halfway down the room, at a long table directly opposite the elevated desk occupied by the man in charge, every afternoon may be seen a unique social function—a dining club meets there, the members of which are already this morning preparing for the coming event. They have separated and each has gone in search of material for the feast. One is strolling down to the Bonsecours Market, where his forlorn appearance will move one or other of the butchers to give him some odd scraps of meat. These are wrapped in a piece of newspaper which has blown down the street, and are hidden in the recesses of his exiguous garments. The others know places where some crusts of bread, a carrot, or a couple of potatoes can be obtained—at a certain hour they will all be back. The club has possessed itself of an old tin can without a handle. This is produced and the party assemble in the old playground; there scraping away the snow, one lights a fire while the others bring bits of wood or paper to feed it. The pot is filled with water and the united contributions of the whole party are placed in it, where they are boiled and then stewed down to a fragrant ragout, which, when done to a turn, is placed in state in the middle of the aforesaid table while the party sitting around it eat it as best they may. They then sit back with that serene smile which follows a good and well-earned meal. "Shall I not take mine ease in my inn?" They get their two meals a day elsewhere, but this has the additional charm of a picnic and it is furthermore a meal over which one does not need to hurry. At the other end of the room is a flat place on the top of an old wall where usually there is some happy man who has secured a supply of "shag" tobacco and is cutting it up and distributing it as a welcome gifts to his friends, for generosity is a prevailing virtue here.

Two men left the Shelter one day in the middle of the winter—one had an overcoat but the other had not and was thinly clad. After walking two or three blocks, the man with the coat was observed to take it off and put it on his friend and they went on. At the end of the next three blocks, the coat was given back to its original possessor and this continued till they reached their destination. In every church in Europe dedicated to St. Martin there is a picture representing that act of wonderful generosity on the part of the Saint which has been considered worthy of commemoration down through all the ages. St. Martin was a knight and was on horseback, clad as a knight should be. He meets a beggar who is almost naked and suffering from the cold. The knight stops his horse, draws his sword, and with it cutting his gorgeous mantle in two gives one half to the beggar. It would seem that these two men from the Shelter were one point ahead of St. Martin in this generosity competition, for the Saint at least had another good mantle at home and could ride quickly back and get it.

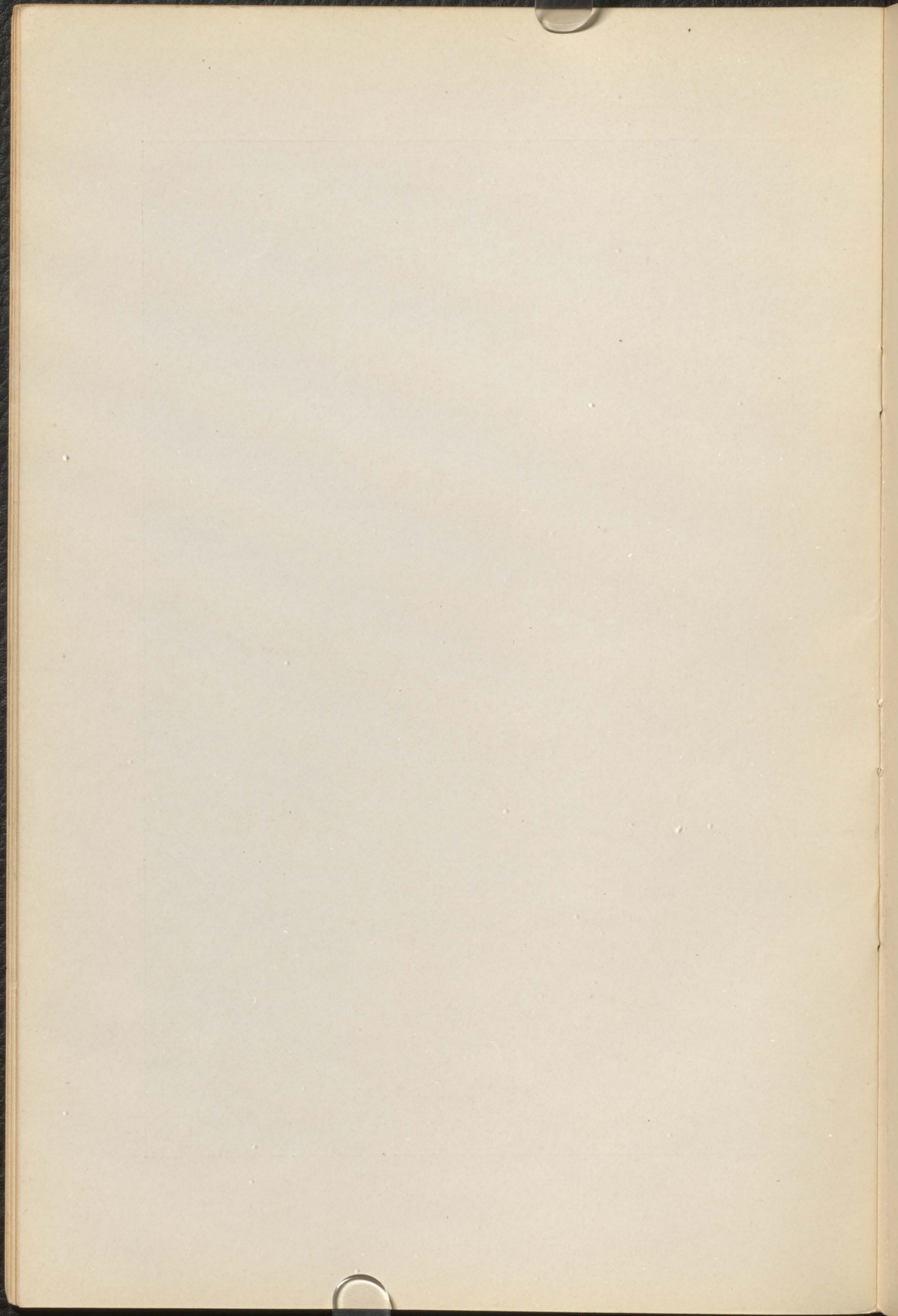
As the Superintendent continues his way through the various rooms he passes the time of day with a man here and there and they have a talk together. The first is a man who used to work in a grain elevator in Alberta. Work failing and hearing, as so many men seem to do in the West that there was work in Montreal, he comes here, only to find none. He has, however, heard that the government is going to undertake some big pieces of work in British Columbia and so, as soon as the cold weather breaks, he will get on a C.P.R. box or flat car and seek his fortune once more in the far west. This man is one of a large class among the unemployed in Canada who will not hesitate to go hundreds of miles, or indeed across the whole continent on an open car in search of work. He says that the Company used to view this mode of travel with disfavour but now they do not offer any objection to it. It is no longer necessary to hide away on the rods beneath the car, you may ride on instead of under it. He prefers a flat car to the top of a box car, especially in cold weather, because on it you can get shelter from the wind under the lee of the next box car ahead. In the meantime he is one of the "announcers" in the theatre of the Shelter.

The next man confides to the Superintendent that he is anxious for the summer to come that he may once more get to work and earn some money. He came from a little town in Ontario where he held a responsible position in a small business enterprise. He had a nice little house in the town and a small bungalow in the country where his family went in summer. When the hard times came the business in question collapsed completely—it was closed down and everyone was discharged. He gave all the money he had to his wife and came to Montreal to retrieve his fortunes. He could, however, find no work and sank lower month by month. Now all is gone and, in the interests of his family, he dare not return home in rags. When the summer comes he hopes to be able to get a decent suit of clothes, return home and if the times become a little better find work there and re-establish himself, no one knowing the depths to which he has fallen. There are many others in the Shelter in exactly the same position.



Quand l'adorer veut nous servir à l'honneur
Sans s'émouvoir de notre espérance
Et nous en faire un objet de sa gloire
C'est se faire à sa gloire
Et se faire pour nous nos nos seigneurs
Quand on nous aime, l'adorer on le mériter
C'est se faire à sa gloire, l'adorer on le mériter

The Stage of the Theatre



And so the officers of the Shelter hear the stories of other men day by day. Some talk because it relieves them to unburden themselves to one whom they have come to regard as a friend. Their monologue, however, is frequently like a bunch of Excelsior packing—it has no beginning or end and is made up of little threads with no connection with one another.

But there is a small group who are thinking out a plan—splendid and romantic—the development of which serves to relieve the present monotony. In the window of the C.P.R. office in the Dominion Square Bldg. there is a picture, set forth in beautiful colors, which shows a steamship sailing through the West Indian Islands. The scenery is wonderfully beautiful, the climate warm and balmy, the palm trees and the tropical foliage look entrancing. The charms of travel there are set forth on the accompanying advertisements and a map is there showing a whole archipelago of little islands. If people who have wealth go there to spend the winter, why cannot they go there too in their own way? Why indeed? The same spirit moves them that moved the men that sailed with Drake to the Spanish Main. True, there is no Spanish gold to be had now but there are all the things that this gold would buy. They are planning so soon as the winter is past to go to Halifax, get work in the shipping there and pool their earnings. In the fall when the work slackens up they will be in a position to buy or hire some kind of a boat and sail away South. They will be able to provision themselves with the rest of the savings and may get some work down there as well.

Then upstairs in the reading room is a little old man who sits in one spot and reads incessantly all and every day. In the library there is an Encyclopedia. He is engaged in reading it through systematically—he has already reached the letter M. He now knows something about everything in the world, the name of which commences with any letter of the alphabet before that. If he can finish the last volume before the Shelter closes he will rival Hermes Trismegistus, who was said by the ancients to be the possessor of a third part of all human knowledge. What a store of knowledge! How many new things to think of! His winter has not been wasted.

Among the foreign men there is a large number whose history is very similar to that of J. K. This man is 34 years of age and came from Bohemia, having been born in Prague. He received a public school education and then followed a special business course and, at the age of 17, took a position as a clerk in a firm of forwarding agents. He was attracted to Canada through advertisements displayed in shipping offices and other agencies in Prague, setting Canada forth as a land of opportunity for those who desired to engage in work of any kind, and especially for those who would take up farming. He therefore left his situation and in 1927 came to Canada, going directly to Saskatoon and paying his own passage all the way. He worked on a farm for two years but was disappointed with the wages that he could obtain and decided to go back to clerical work and so came east to Toronto, where, however, he could find no employment in this line, but after three weeks search secured work as an orderly in the General

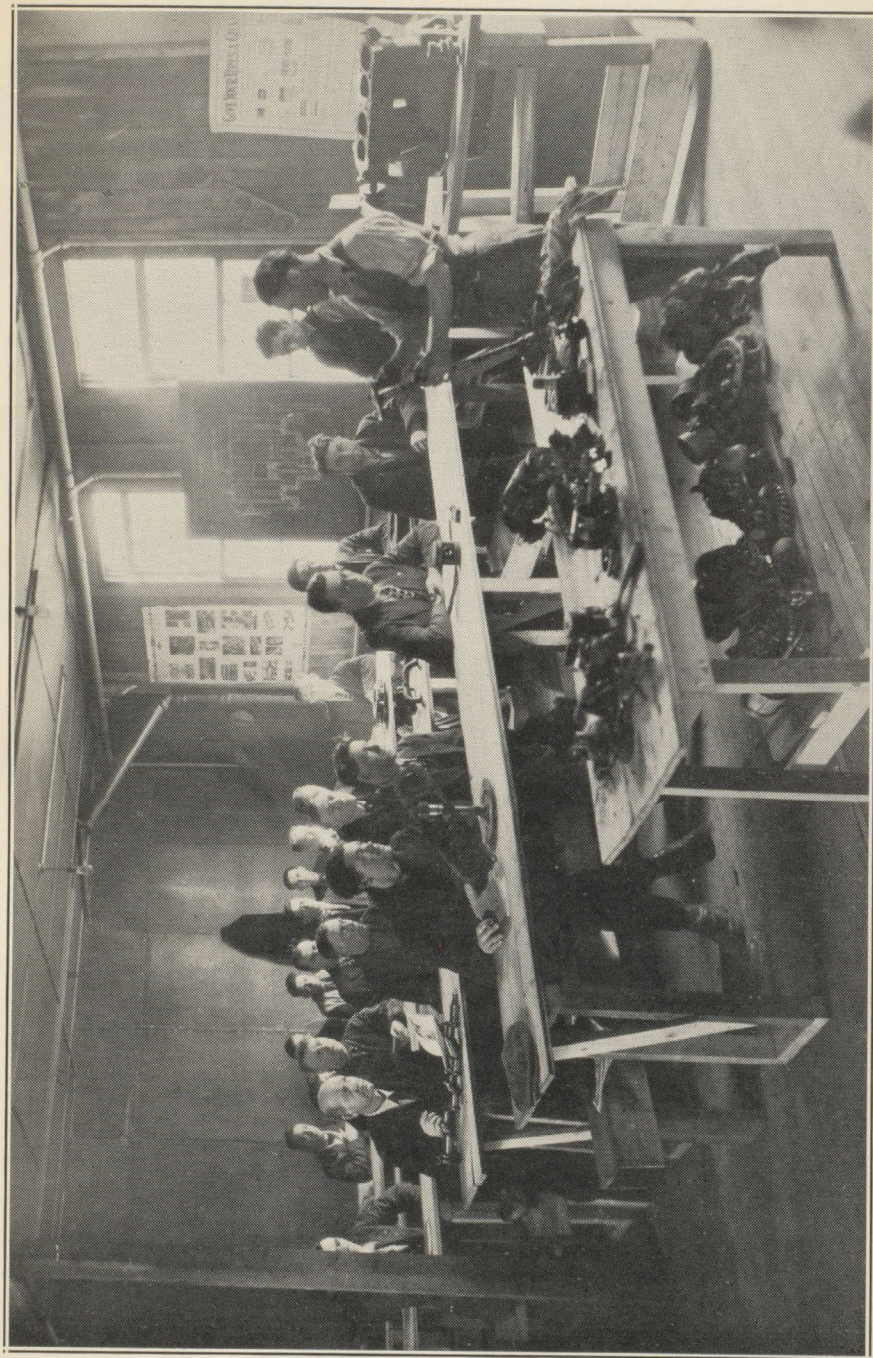
Hospital. A year later, however, the hospital staff was reduced and he was "laid off." After getting a certain amount of intermittent and casual employment, he was advised by friends to try Montreal. He arrived here last year and has been out of work for seven months. Having completely exhausted his little savings he was obliged to come to the Shelter. He likes Canada very much and feels that it is still the land of opportunity that he sought and he expects to stay and make his fortune as soon as normal times return. He attended the educational courses at the Shelter during the winter and says that he derived much benefit from them.

Concerning two men who were in the educational classes, Mr. Guiton writes as follows:—

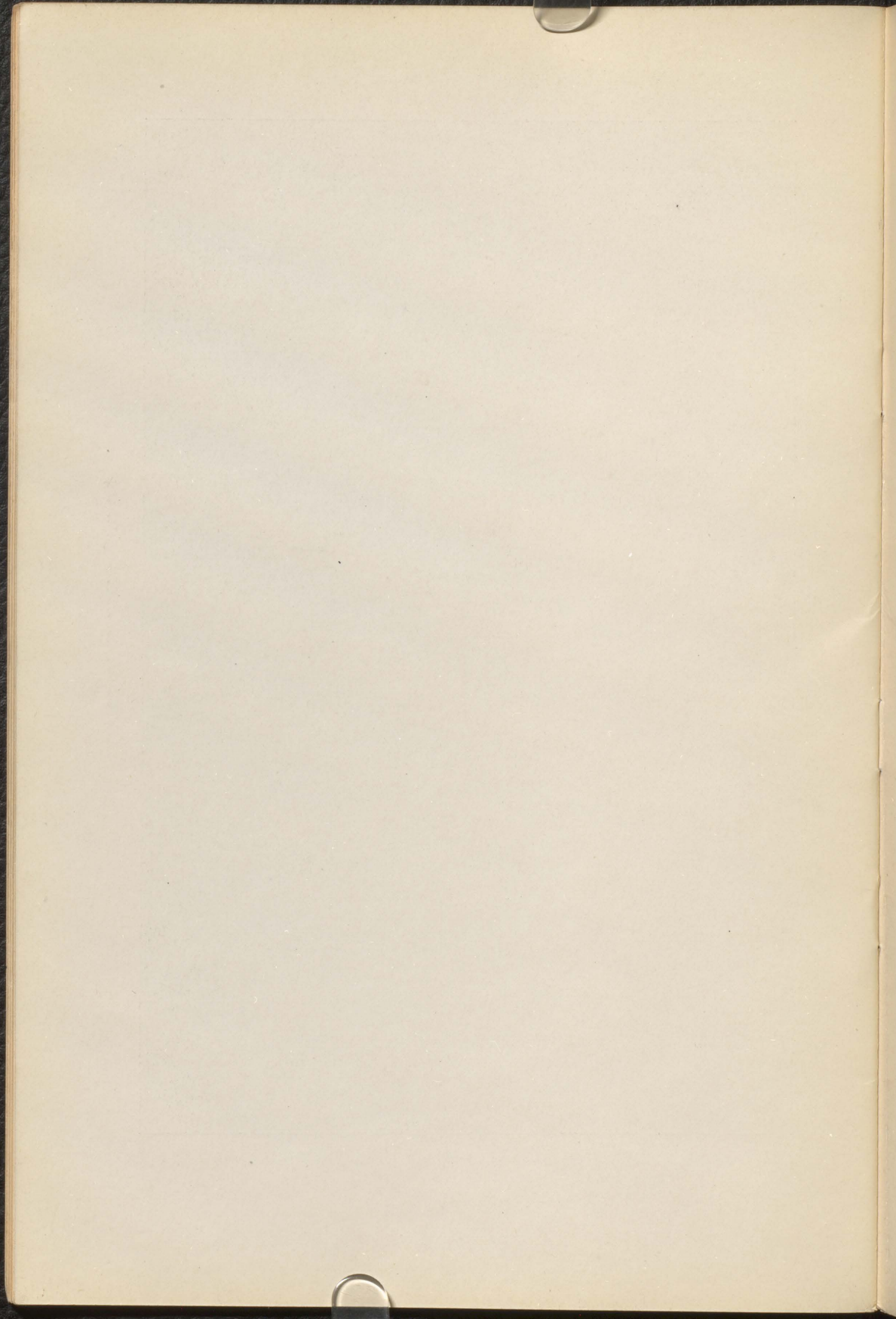
"Early in the season, one of the teachers noticed that A. was always the first man 'on deck' at his classes, and also that he was apparently attending every class that was conducted. One of the members of the committee had a chat with the boy, and soon discovered that in spite of his dirty clothes and poor appearance, he was of more than average intelligence. He had been living at the Vitre Street Refuge for several weeks. Arrangements were made to have him moved to a more congenial place, and clothes were secured for him. He was transferred to the Extension Class, and given special instruction by one of the teachers. Today, through the efforts of the committee and one of his teachers, he is in a permanent position, acting as foreman in a manufacturing plant outside of the city. But there is another side altogether to the value of the classes. One older man expressed the feeling of very many when he said 'The classes have given us a chance to forget for a few hours each day that we are derelicts. The teachers have treated us like men, not like so many animals herded together. It has been the only place where we have been addressed as 'Mr.' instead of 'Here, you!' And the fact that we were learning something . . . anything . . . sort of put a new hope in one'."

The Superintendent every day has brought to him lost articles which men have found lying about in the Shelter. These are usually of little value but nevertheless could be sold for something to the secondhand dealers on Craig Street, were the penniless finders not possessed of a real spirit of honesty. On one occasion he had handed to him an old and much worn spectacle case containing a pair of old fashioned gold mounted spectacles, and the finder expressed real concern lest the owner having lost them might be put to serious inconvenience and perhaps be unable to read.

But in some cases, being recognized as a man of good judgment and wide experience in life, the Superintendent is called upon for advice and assistance of a much more confidential and intimate nature. The constable has confided that he has been married for a number of years but has no children. He has asked the Superintendent to get a baby for him. The Superintendent rises to the occasion, he cancels an important engagement and accepts the constable's invitation to go home to dinner with him and talk the matter over with his wife.



A Class in Automotive Engineering



After a thorough discussion of the whole question, the Superintendent accepts the task and undertakes to find a healthy and really lovely baby boy. This he does before long. The constable and his wife are a most admirable and worthy pair. That baby may not have been born with a silver spoon in his mouth, but was certainly born under a lucky star to be adopted by them.

This little section on the "humanities" may perhaps best be closed with a letter which was left at the Shelter by a young Englishman who was going back to his home in the old country, as it expresses in his own words his estimate of the value of the Shelter to the better class of unemployed men. While returning to England, naturally disappointed that the hopes with which he came to Canada have not been realized, coming to the Shelter he has passed the winter not only in a decent but actually in a profitable manner and he leaves Canada with that feeling of cordiality and friendship which serves to strengthen our bonds with the Motherland.

Montreal, March 18th, 1932

To Whom it may Concern,
Vitre Street Recreation Rooms.

Dear Sirs:—

I am leaving Montreal for my home in London, England; have been in Montreal for the past six weeks and before I leave would like to show my appreciation of the Recreation Rooms that are available to us unemployed at Vitre Street.

We are able to come into these rooms and have available a most modern library of up-to-date books and fictitious (sic) magazines, the daily papers in English and French at all times, which one is able to read unhampered by the weather hazards. Also writing materials are available and letters are mailed free for us to all parts of the Globe. What a relief to be able to write home in times like these and ease their heartaches!

For a person wishing to continue his studies, daily classes are available in the following subjects:—Shorthand, Bookkeeping, Arithmetic, English, French, Engineering; so a person need not forget his time devoted to studies in the past.

I am writing this of my own free will, and I wish the best to all who undertake to help us in these Recreation Rooms in our present plight, caused through no fault of our own.

Yours fraternally,

RONALD GOODWILL

Organization and Administration

The personnel of the Committee of Management has been given above. The smooth and successful running of the Shelter throughout the winter was due very largely to the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of the Shelter and to the Chairmen of the Committees, all of whom were admirably qualified for the work which they respectively undertook and all of whom carried it out in a most efficient manner. Mr. A. Stanley Rough, the Superintendent of the Shelter, was a member of the staff of the Parks and Playgrounds Association and was freed from his duties in connection with this body, to take up the Superintendency of the Shelter for the winter. He possessed a wide experience in dealing with the class of men which thronged to the Shelter and had in an exceptional degree the personal characteristics required for work of this kind.

The Chairmen of the Committees were all voluntary workers and each had complete control of the work belonging to his Committee—as a matter of fact he was the Committee, there being no other members. Mr. Coulson, the Chairman of the House Committee had charge of Building and dealt with all questions of upkeep, alterations and repairs. The United Church of Canada had made itself responsible for the provision of a library and the upkeep of the reading rooms and the Rev. Dr. Gifford, as Chairman of the Library Committee, took charge of this work with the aid of Mr. A. P. L. Larsen, B.D., B.L.S., as Librarian. The Church of England in a similar manner undertook to provide the funds for the Educational Work carried on in the Shelter and this was accordingly placed in charge of the Rev. Mr. Guiton of Christ Church Cathedral, as Chairman of the Educational Committee, who gave much of his time to this work, which was carried out in a most efficient manner. Mr. W. F. S. Shepherd, the Chairman of the Entertainment Committee, had charge of the Theatre and of all entertainments arranged in connection with the Shelter, and was most successful in enlisting the co-operation of the men, drawing entertainers from among them and arranging for a most interesting series of performances extending over the entire winter.

In order that there should always be someone in authority in every room throughout the Shelter, thirty men were picked out from the unemployed coming to the Shelter, who were judged by the Superintendent to be men in whom confidence might be placed, and one of these was put in charge of each room. These were the men who gave out the cards, checkers or dominoes. They were designated as belonging to the staff of the Shelter by wearing grey jerseys of a peculiar pattern. Some of them can be seen standing in the passages or against the wall in certain of the accompanying photographs. These men proved to be most efficient, they became friends of the men in the Shelter, yet saw to it that the rules of the Shelter were observed. They slept together in a large, airy and comfortable room provided for them, but obtained their meals elsewhere. Every morning before the opening hours, these men swept out the Shelter and set it in order for the day.

Behavior and Order

Everyone visiting the Shelter was surprised, as the Committee itself has been, with the excellent behavior of the men. In the rooms set aside for cards and checkers, there is sound of men entering or leaving the room and a subdued hum of conversation but no loud talking or jostling. In the reading rooms absolute quiet has prevailed, and this without any effort on the part of the management. For the first ten weeks no police were in the building. Later on a man occasionally came in bringing with him a bottle of "rubbing alcohol" which he had succeeded in procuring somewhere, and getting away in some corner proceeded to drink it and treat his friends. In certain cases this was not discovered until one or other of the party fell to the floor to all appearances dead. It proved insufficient to merely put these men out of the Shelter. A constable had to be secured and two or three of them "sent down" for a month before the nuisance was stopped. After this the Committee arranged with the Chief of Police to have a constable always somewhere in the building and with him came the majesty of the law. He seldom had anything to do but be in evidence, the men liked him and he occasionally joined them in a game of cards or baseball. He usually spent at least a portion of the afternoon in the theatre, where very occasionally some humorously disposed member of the community undertook to attempt to disconcert some inexperienced performer by "booing" at him from the darkness beyond the footlights. In such cases the representative of the law, with the full approval of public opinion, escorted him to the door and further informed him that for the remainder of the season he would not be re-admitted. The only case where there was anything that could be called a disturbance was in the early fall when the Shelter was first opened. At that time the men were not admitted until 10 a.m., and on two occasions the crowd of men who had gathered outside attempted to force the door and get in earlier. In one case they succeeded in doing so and the police were called in and cleared the building. Ten o'clock had been fixed as the hour of opening because with the limited staff at its disposal the Committee could not arrange to get the building cleaned up earlier. It was recognized, however, that the men's demand was a reasonable one, the necessary readjustments were made and during the remainder of the winter the Shelter was opened at 8.15 a.m., which has proved to be quite satisfactory to all concerned.

Services Rendered to the Community

This social experiment, carried out in Montreal during the winter of 1931-1932, achieved the following results:—

1. It kept between 4000 and 5000 destitute men off the streets all winter, provided them with a warm place where they could sit down and amuse themselves, and if they desired to do so, learn something useful.

2. It made these men, who through no fault of their own were unable to obtain work, feel that they were being decently treated by the community. They were contented instead of being angry and resentful.

3. It had a marked influence in promoting sobriety among the men. They had no liquor and were to all appearances quite happy without it. Mentioning to one of the men one day that it might possibly be necessary to close the Shelter through lack of funds, he said quite frankly, "Well, it's up to you; if the Shelter is closed and we are put out into the street, we shall certainly go and beg some money, buy beer and get drunk."

4. It greatly reduced vagrancy and crime in the city, as shown by the following letters. The first is from the Chief of Police of the City of Montreal and the two following from the City Recorders. These letters speak for themselves and give more authoritative testimony than any which could be supplied by the Committee of the Shelter.

Police Department, City Hall,
Montreal, February 26, 1932

Mr. Wm. Bowie,
Secretary,
Day Shelter for Unemployed Men,
City.

Dear Sir:—

Enclosed herewith you will find a comparative statement of the arrests made by the Officers of this department in 1930 and 1931.

The loiterers are arrested only after 9 o'clock p.m., and if there is an increase in the arrests of loiterers it is partly due to the increase in the number of unemployed and greater activity on the part of our men. Beggars are arrested during day time and figures show a decrease in their arrests.

There is no doubt in my mind that your Day Shelter for Unemployed Men had been one of the most successful enterprises, which helped and encouraged the unemployed in this city during the winter season.

Some time ago, I had the opportunity of visiting your Day Shelter and I have noticed hundreds of men apparently satisfied and contented with the way they are treated. Your Day Shelter has kept those unemployed men out of the streets and by doing so has helped to a great extent our police department in its work.

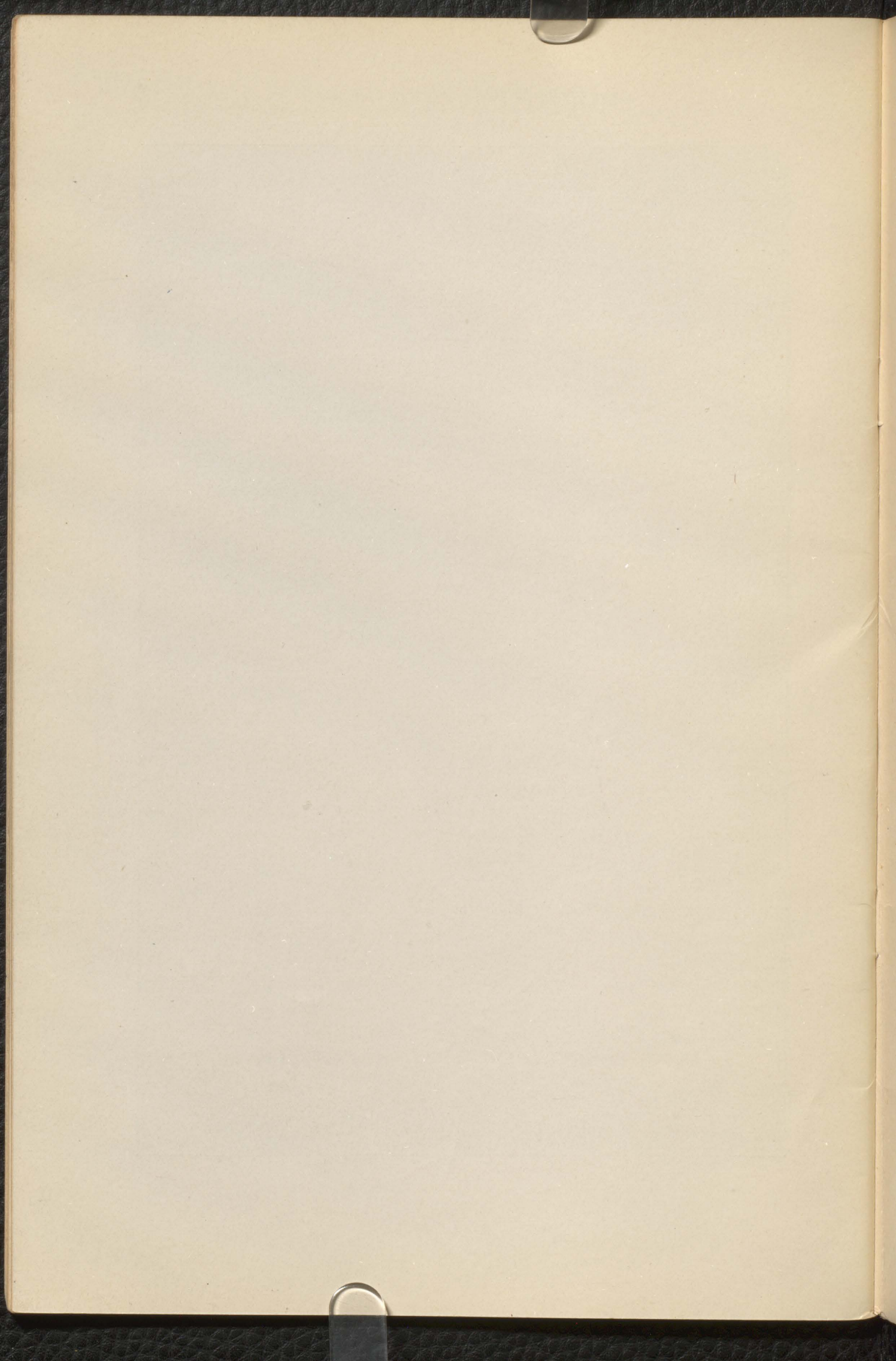
I wish to re-affirm my good will to co-operate with you in any enterprise which would be beneficial to the unemployed men of this city.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) FERNAND DUFRESNE,
Director—Police Department



Entering the Shelter



Recorder's Chambers,
Montreal, 29th February, 1932

William Bowie, Esq.,
Secretary, Day Shelter,
Montreal.

Dear Mr. Bowie,

Replying to your letter of the 22nd inst., I have to state that the delay in acknowledging it was caused by inquiries made in pursuance thereof.

That the quite appreciable decrease in arrests for vagrancy and loitering could be directly traced to the operation of your relief station, is the conclusion I have come to as a result of my investigation.

Faithfully,

(Signed) G. H. SEMPLE

Recorder's Chambers,
Montreal, 9th March, 1932

Mr. William Bowie,
Secretary, Day Shelter for Unemployed Men,
Vitre and Chenneville Streets,
Montreal.

Dear Mr. Bowie,

I must beg your pardon for not answering your letter sooner. The amount of our work is responsible for the delay.

I am since the beginning of your institution "au courant" of what you have done and of what you do to soothe the grief of the unemployed.

Without being able to estimate the number of persons who would be before this court on charges of vagrancy and loitering if your institution was not in operation, I am positive that your part in preventing people from committing these offences is immense.

Many, many persons appearing before our court on one of these charges are not criminals, but only uneducated, indifferent people, who do not care about what they do or what they say, or people who, having no places to go, remain on the streets loitering and begging. And then begins for you and for us the difficult part of our duty; to separate tares from the wheat.

But you have chosen your way and it is a magnificent one. If my wishes and congratulations are of any help to you and to your brother workers, you can rest assured that they are yours.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. A. THOUIN,
Recorder of Montreal

Criticisms

The work carried on at the Shelter has met with wide-spread and general approval.

So far as can be ascertained only three criticisms of it have been made in any quarter.

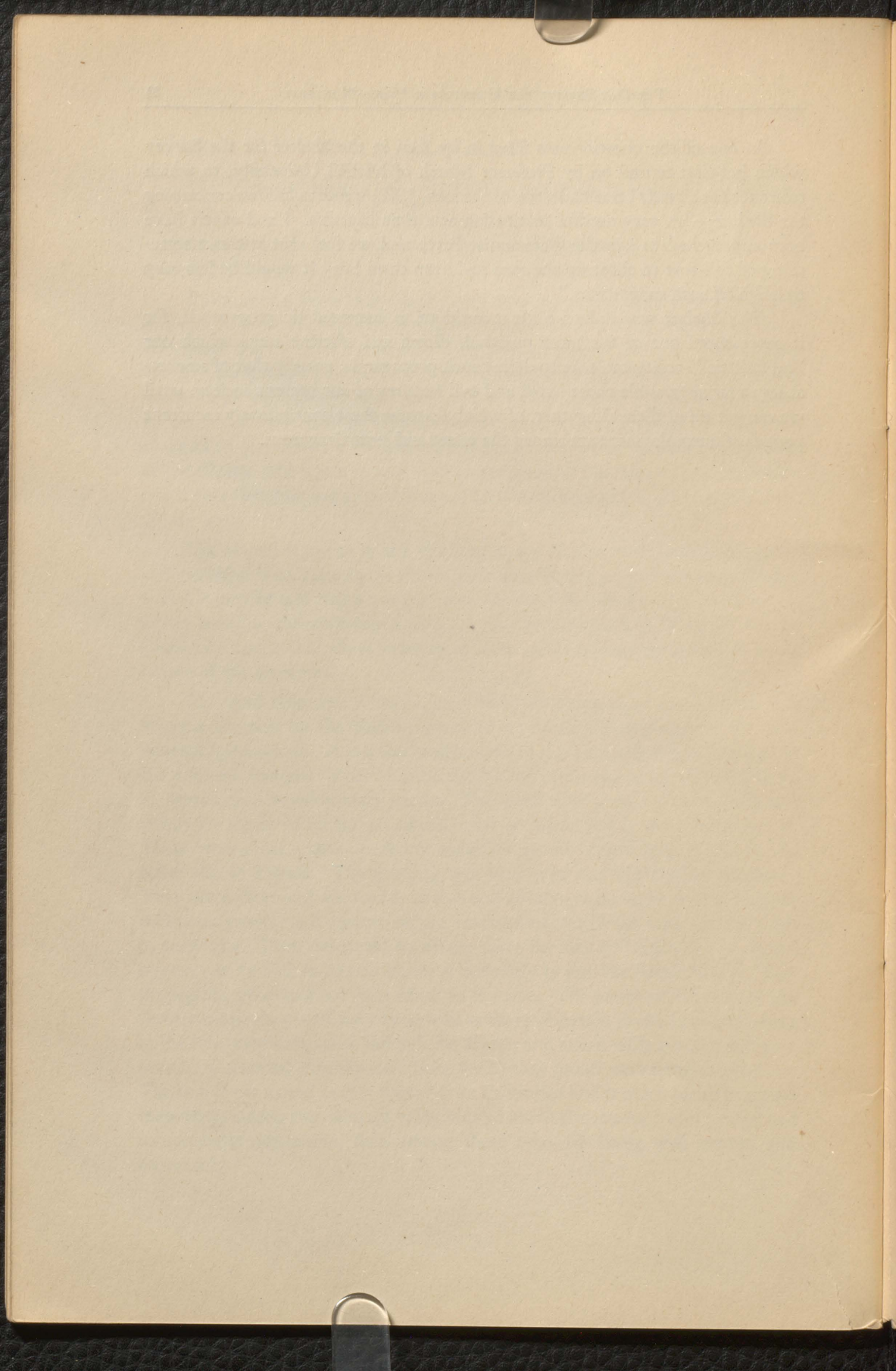
The first of these is that the Shelter housed some men who were not willing to work. There was no ground for this criticism last winter for the simple reason that there was no work to be had. The few occasional jobs that were offered, went to the unemployed married men and these are cared for by other agencies. While there were undoubtedly some men who belonged to that class who prefer to loaf rather than to work—a class which unfortunately is found in every rank of society—and others who were old, ailing or more or less disabled, the officers of the Shelter who came to know many hundreds of the men rather intimately, found that the great majority of them at least were keen and eager to secure work of any kind.

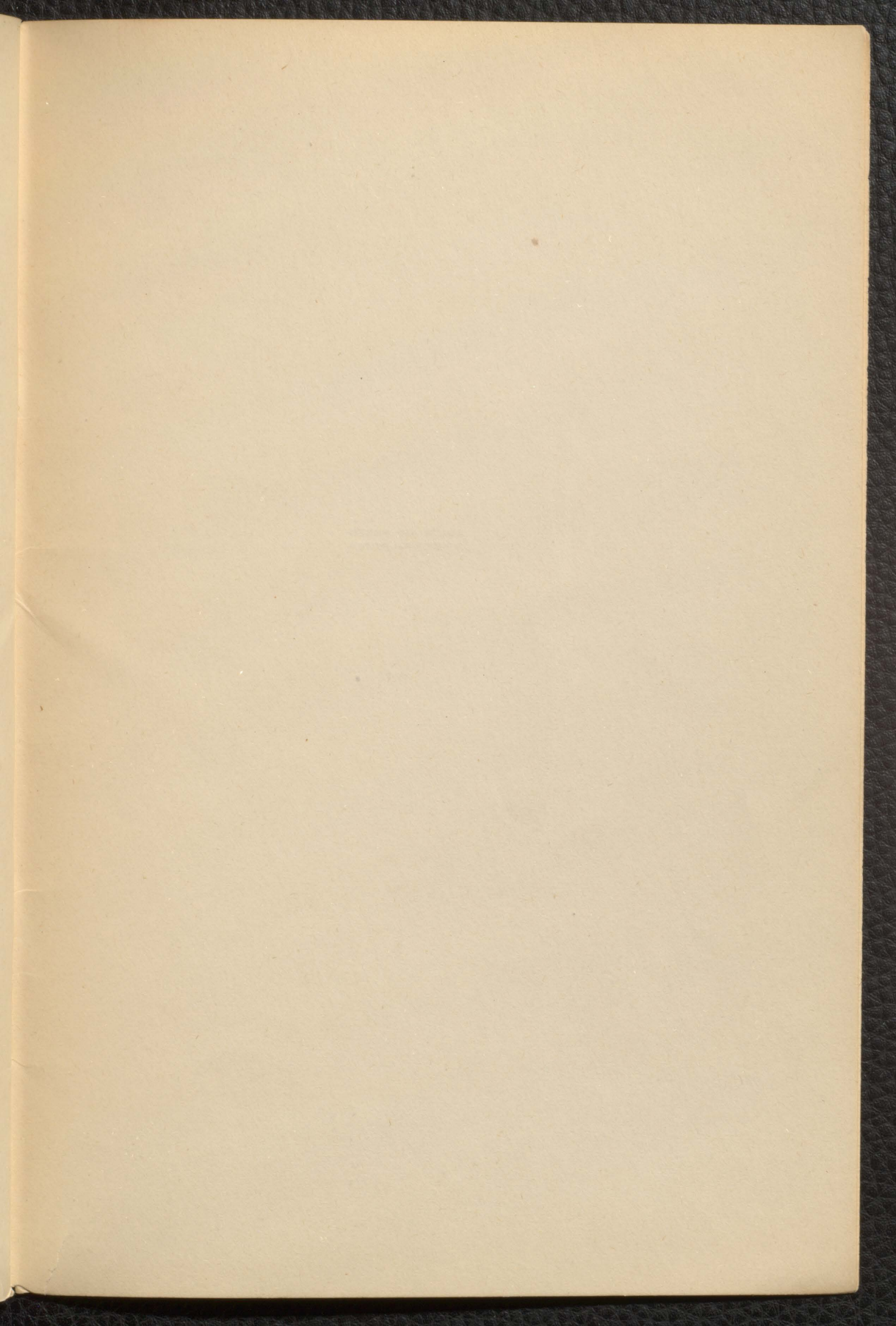
The second criticism is that the men in the Shelter were unduly pampered and provided with luxuries to which they were totally unaccustomed. In reply to this, it may be said that if a warm room and the soft side of a board to sit on are undue luxuries, this criticism is certainly justified, but it is to be hoped for the credit of Canada that these luxuries at least are ordinarily possessed by every citizen of the Dominion.

The third objection is that a great body of unemployed men such as that brought together in the Shelter, provided an admirable opportunity for communistic propaganda. It is a fact well known to the Committee that throughout the winter occasional "Reds" visited the Shelter and engaged in covert attempts to spread their revolutionary views. The work was carried on stealthily and chiefly by means of occasional circulars left on the tables in the various rooms. These were single sheets printed or stencilled on one side in English and on the other side in French. The printing was very poor and the English execrable. They were short and filled with untrue and abusive statements directed against society in general and against certain institutions where the men ate and slept in particular. They concluded by calling upon the men to "organize," to attend meetings to be held in certain places or definitely to join the Soviet Union. This propaganda produced but little effect on the men. The secret service men of the detective department of the city as well as those of certain of the large companies in the city repeatedly went through the Shelter and mixed with the men and they invariably reported that the conditions which they found were quite satisfactory. The fact of the matter is that these Soviet Emissaries find it much easier to spread their views among men who are being hustled about the streets, badly treated and consequently vindictive, than among those who are being well treated and contented.

In one of the questionnaires filled in by men in the Shelter for the Survey which is being carried on by Professor Marsh of McGill University, to which reference has already been made, one of the men, J.M., wrote as follows concerning the Shelter—"A very needful institution at a time like this. I and others have been approached to join the Communist Party and we feel that without something of this sort to cheer up the men and keep them busy it would be less easy to laugh off such suggestions."

The Shelter was indeed a great antidote to communistic progapanda, for it represented one of the most practical, direct and efficient steps which our "capitalistic" society can take to defeat such progapanda, namely that of ameliorating so far as possible those harsh and evil features of our present society, until we can get rid of them altogether, of which features these continuously recurrent periods of unemployment are among the worst and most dangerous.





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