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Work of the W.M.S. in the Japanese Canadian Situation

1. Relocation Centres.

Perhaps the most lasting piece of work was done in the Relocation centres and with the people as they came East after ^{leaving} the centres. Of all the work done, that which I think would rank highest for most ^{of the Japanese} ~~was~~ the educational work done. Essentially the same type of work was done in all centres. I can speak specifically only of Tashme, ^{the one in which I worked,} where I was. ~~Throughout the~~ As you may know when ~~these~~ people of Japanese origin became a Dominion responsibility, the Provincial govt ~~stopped~~ no longer provided High School & the Dominion Commission in charge refused to do so. Hence only public school education was provided in the centre by the govt. The children & their parents wanted High School. Each week when our minister came into Tashme, ^{the boys & girls would} ~~after~~ would ^{crowd around} ~~come~~ to him asking 'couldn't he get them a school?' 'couldn't the church do something?'

Through the W.M.S. gave church who ^{sent} ~~provided~~ missionaries teachers and the co-operation & kindness of Dr. Lucas, of the Department of H.S. Correspondence Courses in Vict. a High School was made possible. It was not quite like a normal school. School was at night from 8:30 - 9:30 PM because ~~we could have~~ ^{no} building was available during the day time. Many of the students had to work part time. In our last grade 11 ^{class} 4 of ^{the} students were teaching ^{grades 3, 6, 7 in} public school in the daytime. We studied (hard together) & played. Many of our students who when they came East had to work, are going to night school to finish H.S. & perhaps go on to University. At a reunion of teachers & students in Toronto this spring I became very much aware of ^{by the attit. of the students & the church, school & life} just how much it had meant to have a school with underlying Christian conviction. It made me very humbly thankful that the ^{W.M.S.} church had had the vision to provide ~~the~~ meet that need for educ. and that I had been a part of it. ^{Our evening church service & our best} ~~were made up~~ ^{came almost entirely} from the student body of the H.S.

The school had a good collection of records used for music appreciation. After church on Sunday evening, everyone released & played the records they wanted. Boys would come & study in the building during the church service - not very quietly always - & come in afterwards. Many of the boys came gradually to church - perhaps first to play ^{or leave} the records - but they kept coming & many are in our ^{here} Eastern churches today.

In some centres the ~~Wms.~~ provided nursery or Kindergarten - a quiet room & harassed mothers in their crowded tenement homes. In Testme the Anglican women did this. In all our work we worked together as much as possible so that the community, most of whom were Buddhist - referred to the work done as ^{by the} the church or the Xians.

While school ^{church st.} took up most of our time, there was always needs to be met in the ~~sphere~~ ^{advisory} of practical sphere. Letters to be written, work to be done to help make the rest of Canada conscious of the ~~fact~~ ^{fact} that the gov't was practicing ~~undemocratic~~ policy. In Nov. '45 a proposed bill would give to the governor & Council the power to revoke nationality, to determine immigration into Canada & deportation. The church & Testme with the leading men of the community & the help of ~~school~~ students, young people addressed & sent out 9000 letters across Canada urging a protest to this bill. Luckily some of you received one. The protests of Canadian people stopped that bill before it went to 3rd reading.

As people were allowed to go East, the most immediate problem was that of trying to find homes, ^{work} for families, homes where boys & girls could work part time in return for their room & board and a small amount of spending money. We canvassed almost all ^{the people in the East} ~~possibilities~~ we knew by letter & wire. In the end many of our students & their families were placed through the work of the returned workers.

when the letter or wire would come though saying there
was a place in the East, great would be the joy & excite-
ment of that boy or girl. They wanted to go at once. But too,
there was a fear after being isolated for four years
away from white people, and normal life ^{as one lives and} Would
^{In spite of all} people ~~not~~ ^{stay} at ~~them~~ ^{there}? Would ~~they~~ ^{she} be welcome
at school? Would people yell 'dirty Jap' down
the street after her as they had before she left Vancouver.
It has been the people in the churches, schools,
who have shown their friendliness to these people
that has made the difficult transition easier.
That still is the thing that is needed. Better housing
for they had to have the address of some place to
stay in Montreal say before they could leave Tokyo.
People wanted to get out so badly, rooms were so
hard to find that they would take almost
anything. Now they must find ~~rooms~~ ^{homes} with
sufficient room to make living not just a ^{crowded} existence.
Friendliness, not patronage, in our churches. That is
what is needed.

Many of our people went back to Japan & some
are inclined to feel that the work there was lost.
But I assure you it wasn't. I have had letters
from most of our students who went back saying
how much they appreciated the work of the school
& the comradeship ~~of~~ of the miss. in camp. Only
^a this week or so ago, I received a letter from one of the
boys who ^{was} very unpromising in school but first ^{late this} ~~became~~
^{friendship for a boy, 1555} ~~for a boy friend~~ became P. Secretary. He did not want
to go back. As he says everything seemed black. 'Now I would see
a very faint light ahead & am going ahead slowly.' His letter
shows he has overcome much of his bitterness & life's and
~~perhaps may~~ now wants to study if I can get him a course.

The work of the W.A.S. in the center cannot be determined
in dollars & cents. This is the ~~changed~~ ^{corrected} attitude of many
young people, changed from bitterness to a creative
responsibility. ^{It will go down in history} that ~~will go down~~ as one of the
bright spots in the ~~rather~~ dark undemocratic blot
in our country's history.

(b) Buddhist

- Most Y.P. - only nominal. Didn't really believe in it, went to satisfy parents - really had little to stand on. Many attend Xian churches in East.
- [Older] [Essei] - Buddhist - great majority.
- Change in practices, even thought of Buddhism, incorporating parts of Xianity - P. School; grace; hymns; parts of moral code.

5. R.C.M.P. -

- between commission and people. Sometimes on one side people - sometime on other. ^{Voluntary repatriation sig - bad.}
- in general keep clear of R.C.M.P. saw it brought up before them. ^{R.C.M.P.} decent, kind attitude to people.

6. Movies.

- greatest fascination in town. 2 nights every 2 wks. Japanese, English (poor Westerns) - all 8mm ^{or 16} films.

Reasons -

1. Escape - from reality of war, of present, from crowdedness of homes, from facing future.
2. Something to do.
3. Entertainment. - Homesickness of Essei to some extent.

7. Other recreation.

1. F.Y.O. - Japanese Youth organization -
 - Occasional dances
 - library
 - Concert at Xmas.
 - in charge of scouts, cubs, guides.
2. Scouts, cubs, guides - very large % in there till June '46 (most of leaders didn't sign & so went East or to New Denver).
3. Basketball - ^{logging} camp men occasionally.
4. Walking hiking - a lot at first, not much in last year.
5. Skating - at lake 5 1/2 mile away. - short time before snow fell.

General Impressions.

1. Commission - distrusted, feared and bitterness against police
men who enforced them.
2. Shinwakai - fairly well trusted. Praised & criticized. Fairly
democratic mouthpiece of people.
3. Schools - saw value of educ., helped to a healthier outlook on life.
4. Churches - Xian - Trust, faith in church. Church is friend.
- Buddhist - left without anything much (nisei).
5. R.C.M.P. - Keep out of their heads.
6. Movies - escape mechanism.
7. Other recreation - not sufficient to meet needs of community.