

Report of Miss Hettie Anderson, Lyon- December 1917.

In spite of December's chilling atmosphere, in spite of baffled attempts to "carry things through", in spite of even the noon rest of two hours, there is a warm feeling and a glow about these beginnings of real contact with the girl and woman industrial worker of France that indicates of readiness to convert latent into potential energy just as fast as we help to supply the fuel and encourage the flame with our fresh forces.

Each time that we make a visit to the Mess Feminin, we wonder at the responsiveness of the women and girls to our feeble efforts in a foreign land to enter into their lives so as to be of service. It is true that to many we only represent relief work. A young mother with a six weeks' old baby came to me at the Mess Feminin to ask if she could possibly get some clothing for her baby which she must carry each day a long distance to the "Pouponniere" at the Usine where she works. Mrs. Bristol, wife of the American YMCA Secretary, helped out with some of her baby's clothes and the American trunks yielded some clothing for the mother, but the committee of the working women at the Mess understand that this is not the purpose of our work.

A little "conducteur" on the tram going out to the Parc d' Artillerie, showed a little locket picture of her "fiance" a young English youth and asked if I knew him. She said he had been in Egypt six months but had lived four months at her mother's home in Marseilles. Then she asked if I could help her to find other employment for it was so cold and the work on the car was too hard for her. I presented her case to Mme. Josserand, who, although under the wife of the Mayor, (Maire) in the splendid work that is being done here for the families of the soldiers and the prisoners, is supervising the work given out to 10,000 women in the city and takes care of orders such as 39,000 blankets for prisoners, offered to write to her and to offer her some other work. At the same time, Mme. Josserand appealed to us for suggestions and material help for her 500 old women, mothers of soldiers, not capable of doing a great deal. Again we had to emphasize the constructive work for young women which is our task.

We have assisted at Feysin on special occasions averaging once a week.

At Parc d' Artillerie, an English class was started the last of November with an attendance that first day of more than one hundred, the larger number coming from curiosity. December 6th, Mlle. Teissedre gave a vocal concert without accompaniment to an audience of at least 200 packed into one dining room. This was between twelve and one as the lunch hours are from eleven to one o'clock. A chorus class was suggested that day and Mademoiselle who has a sympathetic contralto voice, lots of energy and a keen sense of humor, offered to teach the class once a week. She has made two other visits this month and the first and last times she went out after having done night service (volunteer) at the Foyer des Soldats at the Gare, and having given two music lessons in the morning, and really had very little to eat until we had lunch at two o'clock.

The English class has been divided, Miss Winter taking part the middle of the month and going out with me Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. I go out with Mlle. Teissedre on Fridays.

December 27th we presented the Mess Feminin with a pathephon and discs on behalf of the American Y.W.C.A. and again the room was packed with an eager audience for music always draws. On Saturday, December 29th, Miss Romeyn took the second English class- there were about 25 in each class and I took the phonograph to another room, and while having an entertainment, found there was another group that would like English. Four people at least could employ their time well during those noon hours at the Mess for there is no one assembly room. We are waiting for the salle de reunion to begin a real program of lectures and talks for the discomfort is such from the noise and the cold that it does not seem fair to invite outside speakers.

Two trips to St. Etienne were taken during the month one alone and one with Miss Dingman, relative to the suggested apartments for a restaurant and dortoirs.

Madame de Watteville gave another tea at Lyon for the American secretaries and a group of women listened to some of the plans for the work in France and to a recital of some of the war work under the Association in England and in America.

Respectfully submitted,

H. P. Anderson.