

CHAPTER LX

SOCIAL WORK

By Dorothy

All boys know about the Y.M.C.A. because of its swimming pool, its gym classes or something equally attractive. The Y.W.C.A has the same thing for girls and women, with clubs for young and old. When Dorothy went to apply for a job as bread winner (money earner probably sounds better) she was scared stiff. The position was as Girl Reserve Secretary on a staff of ten women in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Because of her job she had to know the superintendent of schools, members of the Board of Education, show an interest in the Women's Club, learn to play bridge and be as sociable as possible. Then imagine standing up before a crowd of boys and girls in a high school auditorium telling them about the especially good time to be had at the "Association" building.

Conferences of hundreds of girls in the attractive hills of northern Pennsylvania don't sound like hard work, but they took a lot of time. We carried on activities most pleasing to girls of upper grammar grades, high school and continuation school ages - clubs in the winter, camps in summer.

Girl Reserves may not be quite as expert at camping as George's Boy Scouts, but they learn a bit of botany, music, first aid, fire building and swimming, where it is most attractive - out-of-doors. For two and a half years Dorothy spent most of her time in this "silk city", the rest of it in traveling to Philadelphia and back again.

This may be called social work, but isn't quite as basically important as the work done with White Williams Foundation in Philadelphia -

working closely with schools over absent children, those who needed medical care or money, a pair of new shoes, lunch, or some insistence on returning to school.

Dorothy will always remember what one girl did when taken to a dental clinic at the University of Pennsylvania. When put in a chair for examination, she held on like grim death. Her mouth was propped open and the dentist said that she would need a bridge for a new tooth. The stump there would have to be sawed down to be used as a pivot. At that she flew out of the chair. She simply had no idea from her life in two filthy rooms on a small dirty court that anyone could be helpful and kind or that she really needed any attention.

The next year of Dorothy's business career was pleasant because spent with college girls at her own university. While still in school she wished for a chance to go back sometime in an official capacity to see if the women on campus couldn't be helped to a squarer deal. She was connected with the Christian Association at a time of turmoil. Construction of a new building had been proposed. Should it serve both men and women? The final decision was that it should and so it stands today - "the heart of the campus."