

Youth hostelting is a healthy way of living. Youngsters who have spent all their lives in the city learn what it really is to be healthy after a summer of living on simple food, regular sleep and plenty of fresh air and outdoor exercise. They also learn how to live economically on a very small allowance—\$1 a day is the youth hostel budget. They learn to live cooperatively through their association with other people in the group and in their contact with other hostelers and the houseparents. There are many stories of how hostelers and houseparents have been mutually benefited.

Youth hostelting teaches the city boy to appreciate the fact that all he has comes from the country. He sees the grain fields and the animals in the pastures

and traces their products to his food and clothing. In the same way, the country lad has an opportunity to visit the city to see art and hear good plays and music.

Youth hostelting has spread very rapidly over the United States. Why should it not do likewise in Canada? It has had a start in the West, but conditions are not as favorable there as they are in the East where there are wonderful possibilities and a real need for youth hostelting. Why should Canadian boys and girls not have the same opportunity as the American boys and girls to get out and see their own country and to broaden their outlook so that they may become better citizens of their own country and of the world?

II.—A Plea for Youth Hostels for Nova Scotia

By IAN F. MACKINNON

"COME on, boys, and pitch off a load while you're resting"—was the encouraging cry of an enthusiastic Musquodoboit farmer of the old school, so it is said, when his summer group of amateur hay-makers from the city stood perspiring by the side of the lofty hay wain they had brought in to the barn from the fields.

Can Nova Scotians of to-day respond to the challenge of a holiday programme of real vigour? With such strenuous recreation as the hay-field, many a now successful Nova Scotian in other parts of the Dominion has formerly employed his holiday time; and the question now is raised for us, would the programme which the Youth Hostel Movement is designed to serve—a programme which calls young folk out of the automobile and the lounge, and away from the street corner and the pool-room—appeal to young Nova Scotians of the present decade? In this degenerate day of "knee-action" cars, power-boats and com-

fortable modern hotels, are there stalwarts willing to shoulder their packs or mount their cycles, and set out to see our province as it can only really be seen, on foot? And could suitable accommodation, clean and inexpensive, be assured them in lodges established along the bracing shores of our province or among its upland farm homes? These are some of the points that seem to be involved in projecting a Youth Hostel Movement for Nova Scotia.

Hiking, cycling, skiing the soft red sand or clay roads winding among the elms of the upper Stewiacke valley or of the East River St. Marys', in this rich month of June, leading off at either side into shady wood paths; the wide expanse of crescent shaped white sands above many a beach on which the blue seas break in August, sands that are bounded farther away by head lands sometimes capped with grey sea-mist; the hard-woods of the Cobequid hills or of the Cape Breton highlands in September; and the same landscape later in the year buried deep in snow and

sparkling in the winter sunshine or under a full moon;—the mind needs merely to pass in review these familiar scenes, in the sequence of the seasons, to realize how perfectly our province is adapted for a scheme of this kind.

Apart from opportunities for physical exercise, and the enjoyment of numerous scenes of natural beauty,—scenes that differ with the different counties,—Nova Scotia offers valuable objectives to the student with a keen eye and an active mind. Places of the greatest historical interest, whose story spans three centuries, are sprinkled more thickly over our landscape and about our shores than in any other area of equal extent in Canada. It is for the wayfarer, walking over the forest ramparts of Annapolis Basin, for whom the morning sun draws aside the curtain of mist to reveal the top-sails to British warships come to demand the surrender of Port Royal; who hears, where the sheep crop the grass over the ruins of Louisbourg, in the wind and the spray from "the deep-voiced neighbouring ocean", the lament of old-time France for her fallen fortress; for whom, when journeying further northward, lonely St. Anne's discloses her far-off fortunes and the date of her earliest settlement.

To these romantic interests are to be added those of a scientific kind. Neither botany nor geology can be studied from a car. For the amateur and the experienced geologist Nova Scotia presents a greater variety of formation, from the early Paleozoic to the remnants of the last Ice Age, than any area of its size in North America. Audubon, Dawson, distinguished scientists of the last century drew their inspiration from an intimate study of our glens and streams.

Who would "take the trail" if these proposed Youth Hostels were established? Would parties be content to go off, under leadership, on tour? It is true, what we sometimes feel about ourselves. Canadians are gregarious only to a point. We prefer very often, even in our 'teens, to make our holiday expeditions singly or with one or two friends at most. Conditions that have

made Youth Hostels a necessity in overcrowded Europe, do not obtain to free and empty Canada. Would there be sufficient interest, then, to justify Youth Hostels here? Would Canadians like the idea?

An answer of a re-assuring kind to these doubts of our sociability is found in the development of Young Peoples work here in the last twenty years. Few Scout, Guide, or Church camps existed in the province in 1920; to-day, a multitude of organized groups camp together and undertake a most elaborate programme under trained leadership. The steady increase of these camps annually tells how greatly these combined holiday arrangements are enjoyed. Such organizations as these would be among the first to take advantage of the opportunity to visit parts of the country otherwise inaccessible to most of their members.

What sort of Youth Hostels would be suited to Nova Scotia? We could not expect to accommodate our young folk overnight at six cents apiece, as is done in some parts of Europe. Nor could we confidently establish in the woods a camp, such as the writer saw just the other day in the Mount Mansfield region of Vermont—stove, bunks, mattress, fuel, shining kitchen ware and camp crockery in plenty, and an invitation to make oneself at home, nailed upon the door! A start might be made with an association of existing permanent camps; for the rest, a farm-house inland; on the sea-coast some fisherman's dwelling, carefully selected for position and more carefully for its occupants; in the forest, a group of log-cabins, the gift of some lumber company; or as a novelty, an attraction peculiar and suitable to Nova Scotia, anchored in the harbours a schooner,—one of the many laid up in these times,—with galley in order and bunks below, a float for swimming and diving, and perhaps a couple of small boats for those who wish to explore the coves! Possibly proposals for the coming winter season would meet with the most immediate response. North of Truro run the Cobequid hills, that lie

like a barrier across the isthmus of Nova Scotia from the Bay of Fundy to the Northumberland Straits, with summits of a thousand feet or more and a general elevation above six hundred. These hills end in Pictou County, where at Mount Dalhousie open slopes, the old pastures of abandoned farms, provide excellent ski runs. All the area is honey-combed with ancient logging trails waiting to be marked and mapped; and at the head of the valleys that lie far up among the hills are farm-homes, many available for a scheme linking them together for winter visitors. Finally, the government of the province might be expected to erect one or more hostels for summer and winter visitors in the beautiful park in Cape Breton traversed by the Cabot Trail.

Besides entertaining our own folk,

with such an enterprise in hand, we may look forward to welcoming parties of youthful visitors to our shores. When Nova Scotia is impatiently awaiting the completion of the last two links of hard surfacing, to open this holiday land to the 40,000,000 residents of the Eastern States; and when the hotel-keeper, the gas station man, guides and others are ready to pounce with none too altruistic intention upon the incoming hordes, it may be good for us to turn our attention to some way of entertaining strangers that is not primarily to make money out of them. Such generous interest will save us from becoming a race of flunkeys, and will be a valuable element in the building up of international goodwill and international peace, the supreme task of all far-sighted citizens to-day.

Health Units in British Columbia

By J. S. CULL

ALTHOUGH many evils may have been attributed to the World War, at least one great service that it accomplished was that it demonstrated that a Nation's greatest resource is its population. In the hour of need when all resources were required, we were shocked to learn that a tremendous proportion of the population were disabled, unfit, and also a liability to the Nation through causes which were absolutely preventable. This disclosure of defects that were materially hampering the advance of our civilization, of our financial returns, was a revelation of something that should be corrected, and there ensued an awakening of the public conscience. We in British Columbia were particularly fortunate in having as our Provincial Health Officer a man who was not slow to take

advantage of this change in the public mind, and who rejoiced at the educational advantage that the War had afforded of driving home the fact that co-operation of the public with the health authorities would bring about the same results in the civil population in peace times as co-operative health work had been able to effect with the various armies in the field; namely, the reduction in casualties from 95% *due to sickness* in the South African War, which lasted two years, to 5%, with ten times the number of men engaged in four years, in the World War.

It is to the broad vision and foresight of the Provincial Health Department that British Columbia owes its advanced position today in Public Health practice and administration. As a result of their forceful and continued statement that education of the public was the basis on which all Public Health work and pro-

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