

that there are a large number of women available for work if they can live at home, who thus can be used with advantage, providing they give full time service; the W.A.A.C. have no use for any but full time workers. Women can therefore now join the Immobile Corps and be guaranteed that they will not be moved.

Mrs. Andrews told the following story of a recruit who got lost, and did not arrive at the station for her hostel until very late when all the conveyances with recruits had left. She applied to the Station Master to know how she was to get to her destination.

Station Master: You can't get there to-night, I think you had better go and sleep with the porter.

Recruit: What do you take me for? I'm an honest woman.

Station Master: So is the porter.

The questions asked as to the nationality of candidates, the nationality of their relatives, and other details, are somewhat exhaustive. The comment of one employer in filling up a form was: "I am this woman's employer, not her godfather." A recruit, in reply to the question: "What is your father's occupation?" wrote "Dead: occupation unknown."

Recruits are accepted at 18, but are not sent to France under 20 years of age. One girl, very anxious to go to France, endeavoured to prove she was eligible. On Mrs. Andrews asking her name, she gave it as Mary Pretoria Jones. She was turned down for service abroad on the strength of that Pretoria.

The women in France do not work in the war-zone, but substitute for men in offices. Some of the work is very responsible. For instance, from the front line, after a battle, comes down an order in code for the different parts of guns wanted. This has to be de-coded and sent on. Supposing any error were made in the number in de-coding, the whole of the operations planned might be held up.

Lower down, the work is more mechanical, such as keeping card registers and other office work. Cooks, waitresses, vegetable maids and pantry maids are also wanted. At the rest stations, for instance, a message may be received: "Expect 1,700 men at 1 o'clock to-night." All these have to be fed as they pass through. In the camps there may be several thousands of men to cook for.

One recruit, whom the W.A.A.C. officers have instructions to look for, Mrs. Andrews said she had never found, but she was quite easy to produce. That was the "by-product woman," whose duty it is to eliminate waste. However, it may have been in the early days of the war, there is not a scrap of waste now. Thus in the case of fat, there are three classes from the point of view of the by-product woman: 1st class, obtained from meat; 2nd class, from leavings on plates; 3rd class, from water in which dishes are washed—all of which serve useful purposes.

Amongst those "mentioned" in Sir Douglas Haig's despatches were some of the members of the W.A.A.C. These were telegraphists (who work in three shifts), who were due to change duty when an air-raid occurred. They telephoned to the camp where the relief shift was stationed

to warn them a bad raid was on, and notified that they would carry on, which they did till the raid was over.

The W.A.A.C.s in France, within certain restrictions, mix quite freely with the men of the British Army. It was realized that it was quite impossible to isolate them, and that the best line was to develop their sense of comradeship and *esprit de corps*, and trust them, a course which has been fully justified.

At first they were misunderstood by the French women, who were quite unaccustomed to seeing women on terms of comradeship with the soldiers. They have quite lived

that down and the Frenchwomen now regard them with good-humoured tolerance, and even call them "Les Tommets."

In conclusion, Mrs. Andrews asked her audience to make known that an immense number of administrators are wanted. The authorities are not appealing to nurses who are invaluable at their own work. They want women of 24 or 25, as well as older ones with a knowledge of the world. Assistant administrators receive £120 per annum, out of which they pay 15s. 6d. a week for board and lodging. They also get £20 for uniform. Within the last month there have been 16 posts to fill at £250 per annum.

The W.A.A.C.s sign on for the duration of the war, but in case of real necessity, they can get "compassionate release."

Up to the present they have supplied nearly a Division.

We hear that the Frenchwomen admire the



Photo, Hoppé.]

[By courtesy of *The Bystander*.

MRS. ANDREWS,
Controller of Recruiting, W.A.A.C.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)