



Your
UNITED
THANK
OFFERING

THE CHURCH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

• **Actions of Grace**

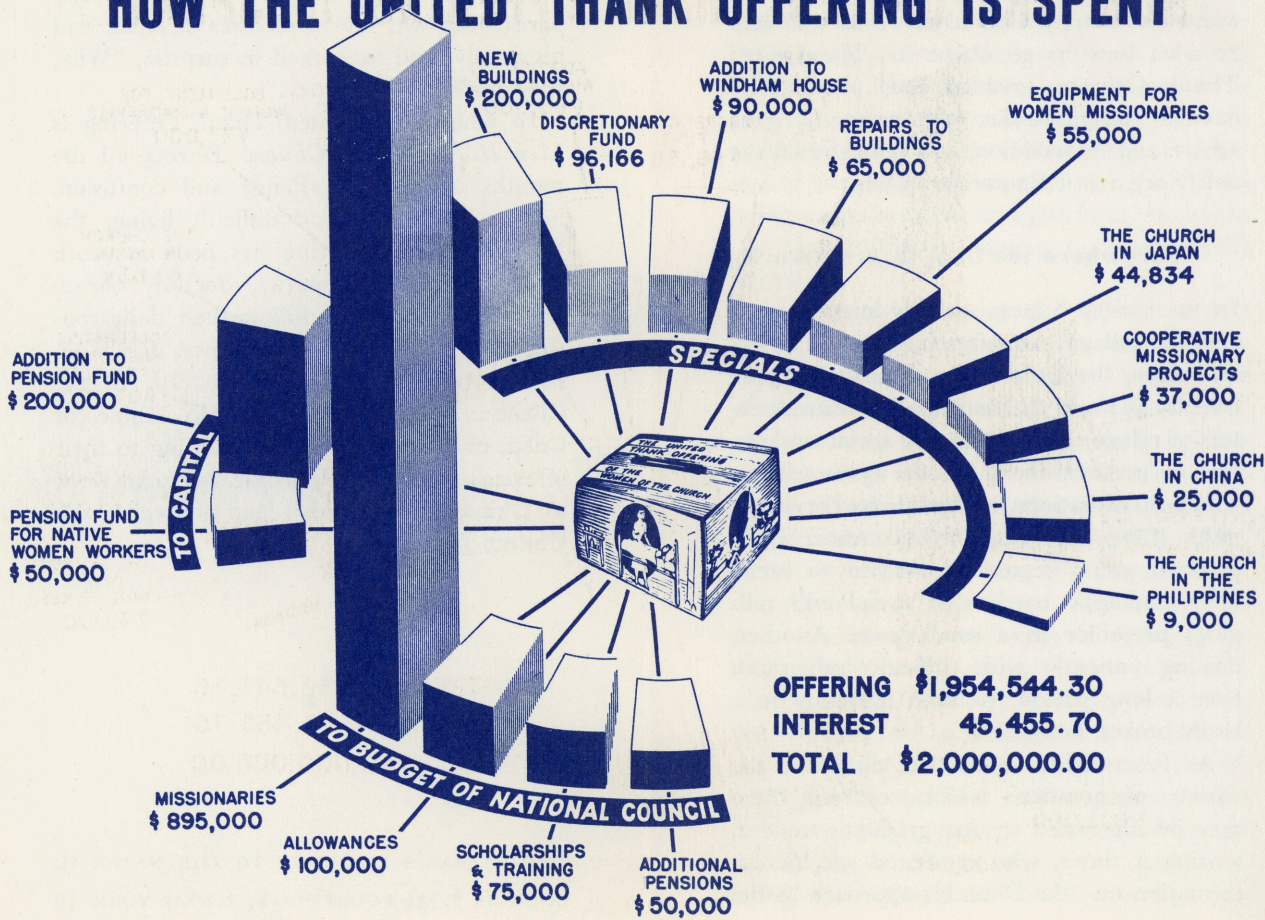
THE STURDY ANGLO-SAXON word *thanksgiving* is translated in French and some other languages by words that mean *actions of grace*. Churchwomen in Brazil, using the Portuguese language, speak of *da Oferta Unida de Ação de Graças*. A Mexican Church paper writes of *la Ofrenda Unida de Gracias*, and says that it is "possibly the greatest common expression of the sisterhood of the women of the Church. It has served since 1889 as a symbol of the gratitude of the women for the mercy of God, and as an evidence of their will to sustain the missionary work of the Church."

The United Thank Offering of two million dollars which was presented at the Triennial Meeting of the women of the Church in 1949 is being spent in the present three-year period, 1950-1952, according to a budget which was adopted by the Triennial.

U. T. O. Budget has Three Parts

THE budget has three main sections: approximately half is for the support of women missionaries, including their training, outfitting, travel, and equipment; one-eighth is added to a pension fund; and the remaining three-eighths are for a great number of missionary projects all over the world.

HOW THE UNITED THANK OFFERING IS SPENT



Many of the women who contribute to the United Thank Offering never actually see any part of the work it accomplishes. Sometimes the distance seems very great indeed between the woman making an offering in one part of the world and the effect of that offering somewhere far away. But after all, not much imagination is needed to connect the two. Thoughts do have wings. Modern physics declares that nothing can exceed the speed of light, but a thought can travel faster.

From Kansas to Liberia

So a woman in Kansas, for instance, making an offering, may think of women at the House of Bethany in Liberia, training young African girls to take their places as Christian teachers or housewives or mothers in that country. In the hinterland of Liberia women of the Vai tribe know the United Thank Offering as *Moi-nu-gbi fala-saa*.

American women, giving thanks for good health and plentiful food, may think of a Puerto Rican nurse who is helping to improve the health of undernourished children at a country clinic somewhere in the mountains of Puerto Rico. Women feeling thankful for good books and plays and music may like to remember that their offerings, their

actions of grace, make possible the work of experienced American women teachers at St. Margaret's School, Tokyo, or St. Agnes, Kyoto, or kindergarten supervisors, or a dietician, all of them among those who are helping Japan's eighty million people struggle out of the slough of despond into which their previous government dragged them. In Japan the United Thank Offering is *Godo Kansha Kenkin*.

In country areas of the United States where parishes are few and small and far apart, women supported by the United Thank Offering are seeking out Church people, teaching the children by mail, putting distant clergy into touch with them. It would encourage these missionaries in lonely places to think that while they are doing their work, other women are thinking of them and making offerings to help them. Missionaries do have discouragements. One of them, going from house to house in a remote lumber camp, asking, "Do any Church people live here?" met with a polite but firm reply at one door when the man of the house said, "No'm, we're heathen and we enjoy to be."

During the summer a Churchwoman on the faculty of a large college felt that something more should be done to increase the

Church's activity among the students. She wanted to start a Canterbury Club and had no idea how to go about it. The United Thank Offering enabled that province to have a college worker who promptly gave advice and information, and later visited the newly organized Canterbury Club.

Everywhere the U. T. O. is at Work

IN the United States, not only in rural areas and on college campuses but also in towns and cities, the United Thank Offering is indirectly at work. It has helped to train directors of religious education and social workers, and to prepare them for the extraordinary variety of situations and questions they must meet. One of them, through some wisely directed group recreation, helped to break down unhappy barriers of racial and religious prejudice in a small town. Another, dealing patiently with difficult individuals over a long period, restored harmony to a badly broken home.

As for religious education directors, the variety of questions which confront them may be illustrated by the graduate student, writing a thesis, who requested specific information on "the Church's approach to the

world crisis," and the ten-year-old in a city parish who was shown pictures of Noah and his family, and exclaimed in surprise, "Why, they don't look like apes!"

In China the United Thank Offering is *Lien Hô Hsieh Ân Chuan*. During all the months of political change and confusion, interrupted mails, and difficult living, the United Thank Offering has been at work while women missionaries, doctors, nurses, teachers, deaconesses, follow their daily routine and, by their very presence in China, silently bear witness to their faith in the Christian religion. Far away, in Maine, or Cuba, or Alaska, women are adding to their offerings and making possible this great work in China and in every land to which the Church has gone.



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