Address

"Y.M.C.A."?

No 46

Subject

How time has solved some troublesome questions

46

1. How time has solved troublesome questions.

There was a time when the Young Men's Christian Association stood on the defensive. Composed of voluntary societies without any apparent head what was there to direct the path they should follow, to prevent them straying hither and thither out into the pathway of error or to check any eclesiastical ambition so natural to youth? But somehow, as a whole, by the good providence of God, they have been kept from straying. They have been admirably organized and extended; they have been, little by little, formed into groups, the groups into divisions, the divisions into departments and the departments regulated by suitable congresses stamped with National and International names.

Many perplexing questions that once arose have been settled. For example. Here is an old one: Will not these bodies gradually encroach upon the Churches of Our Lord and in time replace them? The hundreds of negative answers, long ago made, are now ~~answered~~ repeated and reinforced by years of experience. As a practical fact, it is found that where the best association exists, there the churches are in various

ways most helped. The active, live training of young men under an able, evangelical secretary, fills them with an aggressive spirit and fits them for the best home work in their churches. The Pastor seeks for them to energize his Sunday School in Superintendency and teaching. They give life and energy to prayer and conference meetings which without them were wont to lack interest and enterprize. They are sought for to gather in the straying ones and to bring them gently into the church fold. They keep in their tabernacles open doors every day and night in the week, as the churches do not and cannot. Their buildings, large and commodious, filled to the overflowing with good workers as well as recipients of favor; their schools and classes with appointments and apparatus for the benefit of body, mind and soul, their out-reachings along railway lines with stations here and there for libraries and wholesome teaching and precious influences, that railway employees may not be utterly unthought of and neglected, their entrance into colleges and universities especially where material phylosophy or skeptical instruction have made no

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provision for God or the Bible, organizing all their societies under the one banner, Christ cricified and risen, these speak for themselves and show, not the churches but the church itself in bona fide contact with the World.

2. A scrap of personal history. [Washington] (a)

It has been my privalege to have been very closely connected with young men's christian associations for more than a quarter of a century. I met with the earnest workers who had congregated in Washington in 1861, between the first battle of "Bull Run" and that of "Balls Bluff" when for a few weeks I was waiting orders. We met in a small upper room. How distinctly I recall the voice of an agent of the American Tract Society as he sounded the alarm and succinctly and fervedly portrayed to us the condition and necessities of the camps, where books, papers and songs were so much demanded. How he touched every heart with hid description of the hospitals that were already full. Young men were there and they were the sick that we must visit if we would follow the Master. The American Y.M.C.A. Organization soon put out a Branch and named it "The Christian Commission". The enormous work of this commission coupled with that of the "Sanitary Commission"

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affords the bright spot upon the dark back-ground of the great and terrible war. It is like a sun breaking through and illuminating a whole heavn of clouds. For there is great and brilliant hope in it. The Spirit of it now diffused will put back and keep back the clouds, and, God grant it, send them forever beyond the horizon of our World.

After the war, the Christian Association of Washington where the then sprightly young man R.A.Hall was Secretary, was, like himself, more intensely active than one could describe. It kept honoring me with positions from the leading of Street meetings to presiding over its organized sessions. It extended to me remarkable privileges from the grace of small contributions to the Vice-presidency of its tentative Stock Company, where from want of prescience several of us came near being made poor for life. Oh, the work we attempted and the mistakes we made! are they not written in the hearts of many men and women too? for whole families were brought to the daily sacrifice! Yet out of the conflict came rich experience. Builders have builded better than before and our Lord has been honored. Money

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has flowed into the treasuries and the young men's buildings have been delivered from the impoverishment of Stock Company jobs and from the once over-much vaunted blessings of debt.

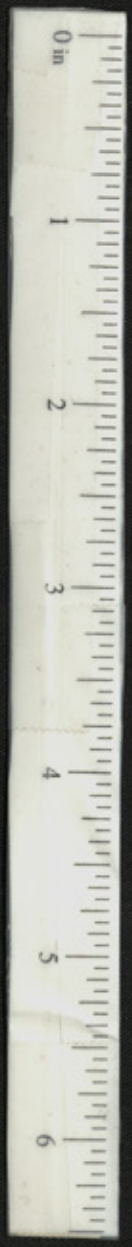
From another point of view, those Washington days were rich and abundant, for young men from every quarter came there and souls were saved.

(b) Portland Oregon.

In Portland, Oregon, my next station for four years, I saw the association there grow from small proportions to large ones. Young men who had gone astray were reclaimed, the jails of the city had graduates to a better life, ~~the~~ a gambling and drinking place was literally converted into the hall of praise and prayer and holy song; men with different banners of faith marched and campaigned together with faces bright and hearts united. The churches were all refreshed and the tremendous warfare ~~[illegible]~~ between the right and the wrong of a frontier city has been ever since waged more strongly for the right.

(c) Omaha, Nebraska,

Again there were several years of observation in Omaha. There the society had a few years before suffered from



some weak and some false brethren. Little by little by wonderful well-doing, persisted in, the Association regained the confidence of good people, has at last put up a fine structure and is now a solid power and a rallying point for the Master's children of every name. ¶ The Pacific Coast (d) And what shall I say for San. Francisco and the Pacific coast? For some years under a load of debt the San. Francisco association was a burden to good men; but the first visit of ~~our~~ Brother D. L. Moody freed it from debt, put in a common sense business secretary from Massachusetts, and re-established the christian work in all fullness. Now, reaching out like our brethren in New York and London by Branches, it has become the centre of perpetual and extraordinary activity; and is of inestimable value for the whole of California.

(E.) The World's Conference.

When abroad, in 1884, I had at the World's conference at Berlin, another view of this young men's agency. There we met the founder of these Christian Institutions, George Williams of London, and mingled with the delegates of many nations, who were inquiring diligently of one another how to correct faults and how to promote virtues

one week and more daise brethren. Little by little by wonderful well-doing generated in it repelled the confidence of good people, and at last put up a fine structure and is now a solid power and a rallying point for the Master's children of every name. And what shall I say for San Francisco and the Pacific coast? For some years under a load of debt the San Francisco association was a burden to good men; but the first visit of our Moody freed it from debt, put in a correct sense business secretary from Massachusetts, and re-established the work in all fairness. Now, reaching out like our brother in New York and London by branches, it has become the centre of perpetual and extraordinary activity; and is of incalculable value for the whole of California.

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and how to girdle the earth with light and knowledge and joy and blessing.

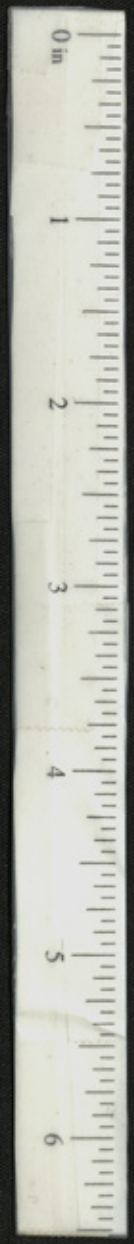
3. The Association is established

Yes, as intimated in the outset, your association work is not now before the world like a State struggling for existence and ever on the defensive. It is like a State with a good constitution already established and wholesome laws already enacted; and with a constituency who are intelligent, virtuous and law abiding.

It may be compared to a grand capacious ship at sea completely equipped for its work, and having a well selected set of officers and a hearty experienced crew. Let it go on to gather in its important freightage and carry it safely to its destination.

4. Rocks & Shoals to be avoided.

Still without gloomy views and misgivings and with no leaning to pessimism the underwriters cannot help feeling much anxiety till the voyage shall be over and the consignments faithfully consummated. ¶ Of course there are still some sharp rocks to be looked out for and to be avoided, and some shoals that betray only a ripple in the breeze but are, especially at low water, as fatal as the



stony cliffs ~~rocks~~. One set of rocks lies in the very centre of the channel. It is the directing Committees. Hitherto you have been favored by men of superb fitness. They have worked ably; they receive and wish only the smallest possible compensation; they work without ostentation, humbly relying upon the Master for their final reward. They can not always remain young. Should a mistake be made in their successors, the ship would be shaken and perhaps shattered to pieces. Another set of rocks is in the broader currents (want of thought, money, time.) A secretary's power lies in the help he can get from active zealous members. Business life is now so absorbing, that few young men can get ~~either~~ the time necessary to render effective help either on the directing boards or in the committees, and further, parallel and ~~rural~~ rival societies are every day springing up to absorb what little time has been left to the youthful christian. ¶ It sometimes seems as though men believed that to accomplish a work all was needed was a new organization. But whatever the organization, Bible or Missionary Society, Sabbath School Union, college union, Christian Endeavor, or what not, time and

rock. One set of rocks lies in the very center of the channel. It is the directing Committee. Whether you have been favored by men of superb fitness. They have worked ably, they receive and wish only the smallest possible compensation; they work without ostentation, humbly relying upon the Master for their final reward. They are not always young. Should a mistake be made in their successors, the ship would be broken and perhaps shattered to pieces. Another set of rocks is in the treasury department. A secretary's powerful lies in the help he can get from active people. Business life is not so absorbing that young men can get without the time necessary to render effective help either on the directing boards or in the committees. Another powerful but moral nonentities are every day springing up to usurpe what little time has been left to the youthful christian. It sometimes seems as though men believed that to accomplish a work all was needed was a new organization. But whatever the organization, Bible or Missionary Society, Sabbath School Union, college union, Christian Endeavor or what not, time and

money must be absorbed. Here, then, the rocks are near the surface and frequently crop out, viz: the want of time on the part of the real living workers.

When we fix our attention upon the shoals, they too are terrible. To speak with the voice of science they come from the materializing tendencies of our environment. People say to us; all right gentlemen; we like your bowling alleys, gymnasiums, reading-rooms and all your mutual-benefit arrangements. They are as good as the benefits of the Masons, the Oddfellows, the Social Clubs; in fact they seem better, they are more economical and more catholic; but we do not see the wisdom of the religious part, let that go; leave it to the churches; it is not popular. Now as a ship cannot reach its destination by avoiding deep water, stearing along the shore where the shallows abound; neither can our associations reach their destination by avoiding the appointed channels which are deepened through the abundance of the Divine Spirit by coursing along the sandbars of apparent worldly advantage, or temporary popular favor. The prim

money must be answered. Here, then, the rocks are most to avoid and frequently crop out, viz: the want of time on the part of the real living workers.

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ary, fundamental, and perpetual object of these associations is the Salvation of the Young Men. Brethren. We must adhere with unflinching tenacity to the main object, graduating our favor to collaterals according to their value as helps: never forgetting that they are but helps. Another set of shoals we see in the proportional increase over and above the workers of those to be cared for. True five Godly men with Christ for a co-partner can do wonders. Yet, remember it makes for the salvation of a man to labor for the salvation of another man. The young man who comes to any class for its benefit to himself will double and treble that benefit to himself by joining the helpers and putting forth his energies for the salvation of other young men.

5. An appeal to all Christians.

Now let us, in closing, give a moment to the sanguine and hopeful side of our labors. We have not a State Church in this country, nor have we religious instruction furnished in any shape by the State to our youth, yet no where on earth is loyality to Almighty God so much demanded as here. He deals with us as a Nation. If the Nation become recreant, corrupt, forgetful of God's requirements the Nation cannot last. And here the people

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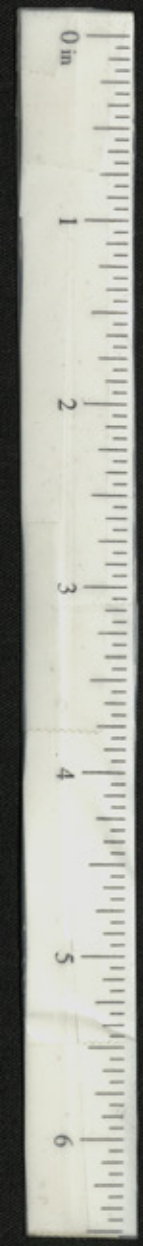
,brought together from the four winds, themselves hold the rule, the young people of to-day will soon lay their grandparents and their parents in the grave and the young people of to-day will soon take up and carry on the Government. Who will make the hearts of the youth right before God? We look to the Gospel of Christ for such rectification. Who shall carry that Gospel to every nook and corner of this republic? you answer Why the Churches of Christ! Yes, Yes, but you young men are yourselves on the churches fighting line- the flexible tenacious fighting line. You cemented to the churches, group to group, body to body must advance their rallying cry. To whom much is given of the same much will be required. Come then, give of your money, of your time, of your zealous energy to strengthen this cementing army which the beloved churches of our Blessed Lord put forth for the salvation of the young men and for the blessing the preservation and the perpetuity of our Nation.

And who shall say that Christ has not chosen you young men and those associated with you, because ye are strong Himself helping you, for the salvation of the whole world? "It is", as one of



our famous Generals said 25 years ago, "a wonderful time to live." There is a larger conflict upon us now than during our great war. Yet, my ~~brethren~~ Brother, for you to bear any considerable part in it, you must yourself be a participant; you must give your whole heart to the Great Leader. So, let me entreat you, if you are still in the valley, come up to the mountain and put on ~~his~~ the Lord's armor. It is a mountain of privilege, a mountain of joy, and will one day be a mountain of victory, Oh, yes more than that, a mountain of triumphant Glory!

Delivered at Watertown N.Y. Thursday afternoon February 21st 1889.

Remarks
brief synopsis of
at
YMCA

2046

Subject
How Time has solved some
troublesome questions

46

Mr. President, Members of the Y. M. C. A. Brethren:

That hymn which you just sung, "Stand up for Jesus", has in my mind a double association. First I think of Rev. Dr. Tyng, of N. Y. and of his son, Dudley A. Tyng, both now gone, to their reward. At a farm house in Penn., the young man who had preached so acceptably often in the Market places of large cities, was refreshing himself during the summer by a little rest and country air. In feeding some grain to a threshing machine the teeth of the wheel caught his sleeve and lacerated his arm so badly that it had to be amputated. At first all thought that he would get well but the shock proved too great, and little by little his life ebbed out. Just before he died, after giving messages to all of the family, his father sitting close to his pillow, said to him: "My son, what shall I tell to the brethren in the ministry?" He whispered as his answer: "Tell them to stand up for Jesus." In this pulpit a short time ago was the Rev. Mr. Duffield, he too has died. Twenty years ago I was in Detroit, Mich., attending a Y. M. C. A. convention. Mr. Duffield's grandfather, the Rev. Dr. Duffield, gave us an excellent welcoming address like that of Mr. Sheldon to-night. Just before he finished it, he felt faint and then fell back against my shoulder, he was carried out of the assembly and soon passed away. Mr. Duffield's father also, who wrote the beautiful hymn entitled "Stand up for Jesus" has gone to his reward. At that time I saw and knew the three, the grandfather, the son and the grandson, all clergymen and at the same time preaching the glad tidings. So much of reminiscence is excited by this expression "Stand up for Jesus" a little sermon preached all round the world to-day.

General Howard then proceeded to give his prepared address. He showed how for Y. M. C. Assns. time has solved many troublesome problems and answered all the objections from within and from without. The active, live, training under an able evangelical secretary fills them with an aggressive spirit and fits them for the best home work. In their churches the pastor seeks for them to energize his sunday school in superintendency and in teaching. They give life and energy to prayer and conference meetings. They help gather in the straying ones and to bring them into the church-fold. They keep open doors day and night which the church cannot do. Their schools and classes furnish appurtenances for the benefit of body, mind and soul, and they extend their work to all classes of young men. Organizing all their societies under the wonderful banner of Christ. Second he gave a few scraps of personal history. First in Washington, D. C., teaching the young men's work there from 1861, and showing how mistakes were made and how remedied, showing the wonderful work of a young man, R. A. Hall, who is now the State Secretary for N. Y. He said: "Out of conflict came rich experience; builders have builded better than before, and our Lord has been honored. Money has flowed into the treasuries and our buildings have been delivered from the impoverishment of stock company jobs and from the over-much vaunted blessings of debt. Young men from every quarter came there and their souls were saved." Next he took a similar view of Portland, Oregon, where duty called him for many years. Where young men even from the jails graduated to a better life, and where a gambling and drinking place was converted into a place of praise, prayer and holiness. Next he took us to Omaha, Neb., where there was great weakness and suffering from mismanagement at first, and showed how little by little wonderful well-doing persisted in had brought a remedy. They have now at last a fine structure and it is a solid power and rallying point for the Master's children of every name. Again we visited the Pacific coast. The SanFrancisco association passed through many sad experiences; was

~~Mr. President, Members of the Y. M. C. A. Brethren:~~

~~That hymn "Stand up for Jesus", which you have just sung, is in~~

burdened with debt and struggled for existence, but at last a visit of Brother D. L. Moody freed it from debt; he put in an excellent secretary, and re-established the Christian work in its integrity. The influence of the San Francisco association is felt along the whole coast. After this Gen. Howard led us to the World's conference where, in 1884, he had the privilege to meet the Beloved George Williams, the founder of all associations. He was surprised to find him a man still in the prime of life and not surprised to find him replete with every Christian grace. Third, the General showed that Y. M. C. A. work was now no longer on the defensive; ~~but~~ he compared it to a city with a good constitution already established, also to capacious ship on sea, equipped for its work, having a good set of officers and a hearty experienced crew, but he warned us against rocks and shoals which were to be avoided. One set of rocks lies in the very centre of the channel, it is the directing committees. Hitherto we have been wonderfully favored, but great care should be taken that the successors of these committees, now growing old, should be carefully selected. Another set of rocks are found in broader currents. The secretary is the central power of the local association, but he needs help from active, zealous members. Business life is so absorbing that it is difficult for young men to get time. The lack of thought, time, money, are some of the rocks. Rival societies suggest others. The shoals were suggested in the wonderful appreciation of gymnasiums, reading-rooms and the hundred other mutual benefit arrangements and at the same time a sort of opposition to any thing of a spiritual tendency. Spirituality is not popular, still it must be remembered that the fundamental object of the Y. M. C. A. is the salvation of young men. Another set of shoals referred to is compared with the active workers the overwhelming number to be cared for. He related some personal experience showing how necessary it is to appeal to the heroic in men, and call them to endure hardships as good soldiers, not to be simply beneficiaries. Then the General closed by an appeal to all Christians, showing how necessary it is to our nation that the youth should be loyal to God, he said: "If the nation becomes recreant, corrupt, forgetful of God's requirements the nation cannot last. And these are the closing words:

"And who shall say that Christ has not chosen you young men and those associated with you because ye are strong, Himself helping you, for the salvation of the whole world? "It is", as one of our famous Generals said 25 years ago, "a wonderful time to live." There is a larger conflict upon us now than during our great war. Yet, my brother, for you to bear any considerable part in it, you must yourself be a participant; you must give your whole heart to the Great Leader. So, let me entreat you, if you are still in the valley, come up to the mountain and put on the Lord's armor. It is a mountain of privilege, a mountain of joy, and will one day be a mountain of victory, Oh, yes more than that, a mountain of triumphant Glory!"

Dictated
Jany 16, 1890