Address de Las Augules

State Convention

Och 21 1886

no 60

Jungiet y.m. C. F. Aldres of Gens O. O. Howards

Delivered in Los angeles at Male Conveners:

(Oct. 71 1/2.

Page 1.

My first real acquaintance with the Y.M.C.A. as a society, began in the fall of 1861. After the first battle of Bull Run, I received a commission of Brigadier General, which detached me from the troops in Virginia, and then while awaiting orders, I was delayed obliged to remain some weeks in Washington. The city, at that time was filled with a restless changing population, and there was much suffering among those who had hastened to the Capital, hoping as the the work of the army and the treasury expanded, to get remunerative employment, and, as is too often the case with such seekers, nine out of every ten were disapointed.

At the first meeting of the Y.M.C.A. which I attended, held in a small upper room--, these and like cases were presented.

who suddenly arose in the meeting and plead for agents to be

sent out with booksand papers to the surrounding camps; and how he showed the need of christian instruction to the numerous hos-

pitals which were fast filling with the wounded from Ball's Bluff,
who were coming in from the advanced lines
and the patients, suffering with malarial attacks, typhoid fever
and measles.

which was but a branch of the Y.M.C.A., was set on foot, and entered upon its famous work of benevolence. It drew funds from the people by the millions, and was the peoples almoner, extending the hand of sympathy and love to any and all of the patriotic sons who could be reached by its kindly agencies.

At the close of the war, in 1865, writing to the Hon. Geo. H. Stuart

President of the "Commission", I used the following words: "You

always had my hearty approval and sympathy in the work of the

Christian Commission. Your work of physical relief is so connected

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in my recollection, with that of the Sanitary Commission, and that of special benevolent associations, that I will only say that, wherever I found your agents, either in the Army of the Potomac, of the Cumberland, or of the Tennessee, I found them faithful in such things, to the important trust committed to them. I have seen them among the soldiers in prayer-meetings, Sunday-schools, and at Sunday services, and, without exception, they were full of zeal and energy in the Masters service. Their spiritual work, encouraging chaplains and aiding them with books, Bibles, Testaments, and with themselves, ready to speak of Christ crucified, at all times and in all places, bringing to us professing christians, cheerful faces and warm pressure of the hand, with a "God bless you and protect you", and following us to every hospital and battle-field, to point to the only Name whereby a soldier can be saved, though he may be ever so brave and patriotic, --- it can never be estimated here below. God will reward you, my dear sir, for the impulse you gave to the great work of the Christian Commission, and for your indomitable energy, displayed in perpetuating it till the end. With your strong faith in Christ you took officers, soldiers, and citizens in the arms of your love, and bore them right on, to work for our God and for humanity.

The Christian Commission has written its record on the tablets of theusands of precious souls, and needs nothing to render it perpetual.for its influence is eternal.

One or two instances will show a phase of the work not often referred to.--In the Army of the Potomac a delegate, Mr. Williams, reported to his headquarters, as follows:

subjects, and among them the best way of reaching the soldiers.

A soldier, who had come in unobserved with one of the delegates after the evening meeting, and had sat in silence, listening to

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our conversation, started up with energy and great determination and trembling in every limb, stepped forward, placed both hands upon the table, looked us full in the face, and said, with the deepest feeling, "Well, Christian brethern, I have come in to ask you to pray with me." We dropped upon our knees at once, rebuked in our hearts that we had not, some of us, noticed his anguish and spoken to him before. Every member of our circle besought God's spirit and then he who had asked our prayers, prayed for himself.

One of our number went with the young man to his tent, and the next day he was rejoicing in his new-found hope.

Not long after, about two o'clock in the morning, the Delegates were aroused by a loud knocking at the door of their tent. One of them arose, and found two men in deep distress for their soul's salvation, anxious to have the brethern pray for them. Candles were lighted, and the morning hours were away in earnest supplication with God that he would give peace to these earnest seekers. Peace came, and through their influence many others were brought to Christ, till the number of conversions at the station exceeded a hundred. Nor was the interest confined to the metings in our chapel, but extended to regiments which had chaplains, who held religious services among their own men.

One evening a man belonging to a battery, three-fourths of a mile over the chapel, strayed over to meeting. He became greatly interested in the services. When about half way home, he kneeled by a stump and prayed. The next night, with a companion, he sought the meeting again. The stump saw two praying souls that night, and upon their return to camp they began to work for Christ, and in a few weeks forty men out of that battery alone found peace in believing."

When the war was closed my duties again brought me to Washington.

Here both remeniscence and gratitude led me to the Young Mens

Association, which I served in various capacities.

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We were among the first to undertake to erect suitable building.

For this we formed a special company of which the Hon. Salmon P.

Chase was the President, and I the Vice President. WE built the structure near the heart of Washington, but like some other mistaken folk, we allowed debt and mortgage to be saddled upon it, and this finally lest that building to the young men and their friends. Yet for years we had a model institution. Fortunately, the Association elected a superb secretary. He would do more work than any five other men I ever saw.

The gymnasium for those who must have physical exercise; the (The lilevary and) Library and Reading-Room for the intellectual; evening classes, for the many day-workersboth in ordinary studies and in music; the parlors where members came for solid and business confidence. The rooms earnest ministers had their weekly gatherings and took counsel of each other and of God. The committee rooms where the lively secretary brought his committees togather like companies to the drill-ground; the daily meetings for reading the divine Word, and for prayer; the gatherings of Delegates before they went out to the jail and the alms-house, the hespital, the neighborhood meetings, or the larger assemblies, like those on the Delta at the corner of 7° and Penna. Avenue. Where a short prayer, a few verses and spirited songs and exerhortations called in the curious moving multitude. Who can tell it. -- men and womenoften like theseon the day of Pentacest, inquiring the way out of discentent into content, out of great sin and heavy serrow into cleansing and great joy. Tes, for six years I saw the churches in Washington working well through this agency. The delegates from our own active church to the Y.M.C.A. went to the Young Men's roomswhen their own Churchdoors were shut, -but they were the most faithful to their own home-duties when the church doors were open and the bell called them to services there. You could feel the presence of those who were trained in Association work whenever you found them.

Promt to speak; brief and clear in utterance; always exhibiting a

deep and earnest spirit, -- the Rastor rejoiced to have a few of

them step into his Wednesday evening

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meeting for prayer. It gave freshness and zest and inspriation to all the sincere workers, -it gave the strength of hope and expectam cy to these who were really sending up petitions to Heaven. On to several eccasions I have been favored with the unspeakable privilege of attending conventions like this, the general international conventions. At Detroit Mich. the delegation from Europe Canada and the United States met several years age. The city for a few days was deeply moved. The churcheswere thronged and the door ways and sidewalks were crowded. The voice of singing and prayer arose from scores and hundreds of households from every direction and I thought as I went away from that meeting back to my (that every day work, I never in my life before had been so happy. To me as it was doubtless to others, that gathering at the very top of mount Zion was a preparation for grievous serrows and deep Soontacome But the meeting forgrand inspiring power of that occasion did not fail the lenly pilgrim, who were forced to thread the wilderness effitemptation or encounter the passes of a Golgotha. Lowell Mass. and Portland Me. each enjoyed a similar occasion. Great numbers of the young men of different lands filled these cities. Beld, strong intensely active they were welded together by the spirit, in brotherly love. Their speech was elequent, their appeals tender, their faith wenderful. Who could help bidding them God speed . After my Washington experience I was sent the War Dept. to the North west. At Portland Oregon, we found a small society bes in the few years of my residence there es grew (Ithadamost efficient secretary tworking niembers; mightily. It was the means of saving a large number of poor blinded men, giving them by the Divine helps clear spititual lambler brought their implaments and surrendered them to be kept as memorials of Gods deliverance. Drunkards were theroughly reformed. Infidels, fixed and rigid in their long unbelief, were shaken, and with tears and tremblinglips confessed the Lord and thanked him for faith and strong hope. All this was not done in a corner. The churches confessed Christ, were united in this

meeting for prayer. It gave freshness and zest and inspristion to estoogre and equi to dignorta edt even ti-, aredrew executa edt lis oy to these whe were really sending up petitions to Heaven. On the several eccasions I have been favored with the unspeakelle privi--merdantaing conventions like this - the general internation--mad equantions. At Detroit Mich. the delegation from Europe Camada and the United States met several years ago. The city for a Too days was deeply moved. The churchesvere thronged and the deer ways and sidewalks were erowded. The voice of singing and prayer arese fire scores and hundreds of households from every directhe of food gardeen fad more twee from I as support I bus noit every day work, I never in my life before had been so happy. To ged year edd da gaireding dadt, aredie of aselidoob saw it as on good bas aweries avevelrg-tel meidaragerq a saw meil immem le -soon Jadi le rewed Buildeur mers al first occasion did not fail the lands pilgrim who were forced to thread the . mitagled a le a recount ent resenvoire no neitat que te a del vela. Lewell Mass. and Portland Me. each enjoyed a similar occasion. drest numbers of the young men of different lands filled these cities. Bold, strong intensely active they were welded together by the spirit, in bretherly lave. Their speech was elequent, their appeals tender, their faith wonderful. Whe could help bidding them "dod speed". After my Washington experience I was sent the War Dept. to the Morth west. At Portland Oregon we found a NAMERIC wern to ored somebiast we to array we't out it ore yteleos flam . Cappard annual efficient seemetary to morking rasem berg mightily. It was the means of saving a large number of poor fautiting them by the Divine helps elect spiritual or cody boromourus bus symentique resid theorem . equante be kept as memorials of Gods deliverance. Drankerds were their oughly reformed. Infidels, fixed and rigid in their leng wahelief were shaken, and with tears and tremblinglips semfessed the lord ence on new sint file . eque morte bas dais for mid beamedt bas

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When abroad in 185. I was a delegate to the general international conference at Berlin, Then the best thing that happened to me among other excellent things was the beginning of a personal acquaintanceship with George Williams of London. He with a few associates was the originators of this remarkable agency and organization for the salvation of young men. Small of statue, gentle of manners and rather retiring withal, you would not at first appre hend the power of the man. But his glowing face, elequent speech and large liberal soul soon possess and charm you. He is a merchant who devotes his earnings to thes channel and not only that; but he watches ever the Y.M.C.A.work as a leving father over his precious child. He was when I saw him in Berlin and afterwards in Lendon contributing all he could spare from his income to build of thisking up new associations in France. It would do anybody good to have & met there in Berlin delegates from the four corners of the Globe,all men of faith and of prayer. I do not think any of our men from from the United States were abreast of the English, German or French in education, but they deferred to our people greatly for their clear exhibition of practical talent. It was an interesting incident to hear them put secretaries Merse and McBurney of New York on the platform and question them earnestly as to how this work was done in America. our fellowing up the young men so extensively on our railways and our penetrating so successfully into the very halls of college and university life gave them particular satisfaction. Our parlor conferenceswhere business-men were made acquainted with the wants of a community, and from which Young Mens buildings had sprung, were very suggestive. I have detained you long enough, I think, in presenting to youln a sort of personal-historic way, the aims of our Young Men's Christains Associations, Our San Francisco Secretary, has his own fashion of condensing. He wrote me a few days ago a few pregnant sentence s, which he will forgive me, I know, for adopting. "Speaking of the associations, he says: "Their growth has been more rapid in this country than in any other part of the world.

Innovente in is and at at at at a sew I, the provide ned? conference at Berlin. Then the best thing that happened to me -upon leavering a te grantined out was against trallease rente grown autanceship with Goorge Williams of London. He with a few aggs--imagra and youngs alderramer sid? To aretamigine out eaw actain esting, dutate to Isant .non namer to notice the esting, gentle orque faril ta ten birow may, Lasking grinifer redistr brom a remner to hend the power of the men. But his glowing face, elequent speech and large liberal satt meen postess and charm you. He is a merchant who devotes his earnings to thes channel and not only that; sid tovo tental anivel a sa wrow.A.D.M.Y ent were sentence of the precious child. He was when I saw him in Berlin and afterwards in London contributing all he could spare from his income to build up new associations in France. It would do smybody good to have k ". edoff ont to avenues were out more setamoleb milroff at went for and now two le yes still for on I . reyord le bes dist le mem fin from the United States were abroast of the English, Cernson or Tench in soucation, but they deferred to our people greatly MATON Shup yourse wint me new it . Comeins facilitate in neistdate usefo wend well to yentudal bas seroll seitsteroes buy mould used of thebioni aids wed es as viscourse ment meltacup bus mreitalq edt ne drev work was done in America. our fellewith up the young han so extensively on our railways and our pensiveting so successfully -und south every halls of dollage and university life gave them pure nom-anentand erenwaeenerelmes refrag wo .morfeeleise refuelt wore made acquainted with the wants of a community, and from which Young Mans buildings had sprung, were very suggestive. I have detained you long enough, I think, in presenting to youln a cort of personal-historic way, the sime of our Young lien's Christains Associations, Our San Francisco Secretary, has his own fashton of condensing. He wrote me a few days age a few pregnant sentenceys, which he ill forgive me, I know, for adopting. reed and diworn ried? : eyes ed, anotratoeses edf to maideeg?

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his organization has a larger following th of business men than any other of the church, and receives the support and endorsement of all who are interested in the moral and spiritual elevation of young men. In nearly all of the larger cities of America, magnificent buildings have been erected by interested citizens and philanthropists, in which to cary on more efficiently, the business of the Association, and our aim is to benefit young men, spiritually socially, intellectually and physically. Spiritually, by intelliggently organized meetings, Bible-classes, song-services, and other similar means; intellectually, by evening educational classes, well selected libraries, and well stocked reading-rooms; socially, by social gatherings for young men where the best companionship is found; physically, by well equipped gymnasiums and other proper provissions for amusements. In fact, they are christian homes for young men just so far as it is possible for us to make them so. The railroad companies are interested in the work to the (in the united States) tent of contributing \$70,000.00. a year. We have now over 60. railroad secretaries. The work is organized among German young men, commercial travelers, colored young men and 800,000.railroad young men. It is the most thoroughly organized work in existence systematically done and carried feward in the most business like marmer. In fact, it has been denominated by eminent men as the gigantic religious movement of the 19th century. There is no place in the world where the work is more needed than in California. It is estimated that there are 300% 7000, young men between the age of 16 and 25 in California, a great majority of whom are away from home and home influences. Only about 5 per cent of this number attend any church regularly and only about 2 per cent are A christians. It is a rare thing to find a native son of this state " christian member. who is an active man. It is sad but it is true.

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There are more young men living in lodging houses and private

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according to its population in this country; more temptations to allure young men in California than in any other state of its population. Hence, the importance of our work is apparent. Well, then, my brethren the in view of this condensed statement, the needs are evident. First more consecrated, effective workers in each existing association; and secondly, more associations. For the individual associations we earnestly count the strong sympathy of the men and women who love what is honest, what is pure, what is of good repute. A young man once a drunkard has little to recommend him; ence given up to dishenest practices neither merchants ner mechanics can trust him. Fathers and mothers want soms that are good and true. Poor men in these days organize for protection against the rich- labor against capital: my heart often sympathises with the former more than I can tell. I do hone an a truly catholic association, estly believe that the common platform is to be found right here When a rich man begins to be the recognized steward of the Lord he becomes the avowed friend of the Lord's children. He is no longer "The Mich Man" but the Lord's steward. When the poor man becomes the steward of the Lord he has a bank to draw from that cannot fail. Emmity and hostility and all hatred are slain. But some of the pooble say General, you are not practical. The rich will not become unselfish christians, monopoly does exist and thrive and the poor are made poorer. Yes, but with Ged's help how much can be done? If we cannot care all these ills we can mitigate them. Fret not thyself because of evil deers. Fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. For somehow if we give ourselves unreservedly to our in his own wan Master's service, te will somehow lead our wise men into better wisdom and certainly He will bring just measures to pass. There is no substantial relief and never will be from the ills that afflict us incaing or cherishing what every honest heart knews to be wrong. Let us then, my brethren and friends, reassert the true platform for every soul on earth; love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and thy neighbor as thy self.

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