

Address,  
delivered at the Y.M.C.A. International  
Convention, Springfield, Mass. 1895.

Vol. 6, No. 11.

Subject,  
"Christianity in the army".



H. S. HOWARD,

SOLE AGENT

SPELTERINE HOOF STUFFING.

WASHINGTON RED CEDAR SHINGLES.

GENERAL AGENT

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156 COLLEGE STREET.

BURLINGTON, VT., \_\_\_\_\_ 189

Address,

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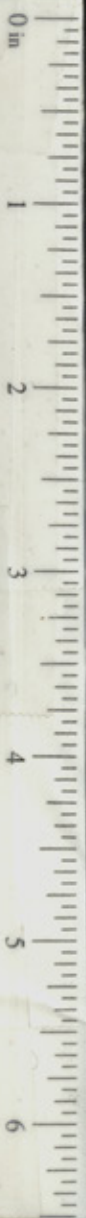
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Vol. 6, No. 11.

LINEN

Subject,

"Christianity in the air."





Delivered at Y. M. C. A. International  
Convention Springfield, Mass May 8/1895

CHRISTIANITY IN THE ARMY.

Brethren of the Convention:-

Your committee has assigned to me as a subject "Christianity in the Army". By this, I understand that it is desired or hoped by your committee to gain some knowledge through me of the Army of the United States as it now exists with regard :

First, to its status or Christian condition in this time of peace ;

Second, as to whether or not any help can be brought to better that condition ;

And Third, whether or not our Y. M. C. A. Methods could be effectually introduced as they have been here and there among the railroad employees of our country.

1st (a) As to Present Condition.

The circumstances are in some respects the same as with railroad employees. The garrisons are scattered over our land from East to West, and North to South. We have thirty-four chaplain posts where chaplains are stationed and more or less efficient, but the other posts, sixty in number, are mainly without religious exercises, especially without provision for the soldiers. Many of the garrisons,







#2  
however, are near a city, village or hamlet where there are active Christian churches, and where more or less interest is taken in their welfare, and religious privileges kindly extended to those who have any care for them.

(b) A Garrison or Army Post.

In further considering the condition or status it may be well to take an individual garrison for specific study. The army here is represented in miniature. It has its commanding and staff officers; it has its companies, troops, or batteries with their commissioned officers. The officers have their families. The non-commissioned officers and employees, their families; the other enlisted soldiers, for the most part, can have no families near them, living together in their barracks, with very little if any separation from each other or privacy.

(c) Our Heritage.

The "customs of service", above and beyond all military requirements of law and regulations, have divided these people in all their social relations, and this division can, I believe, never be broken while an army remains an army; it is an inheritance from England and from our fathers.

Differing from England and most other nations, religion with us is left to the individual conscience; and all authorities are



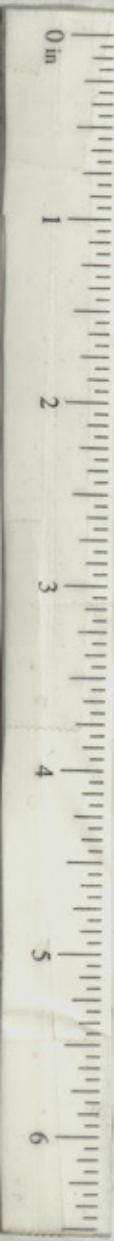
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particularly solicitous to avoid any interference whatever with the freedom of thought, belief and action of those under their charge. This condition presents great difficulties to those who would do something for the conviction, conversion, salvation or subsequent development of men connected with the army.

The chaplain himself, where there is one, is greatly troubled. Sometimes he succeeds in gathering a few officers and their families for social worship, but few, if any, soldiers. Sometimes he succeeds in interesting the enlisted men and getting them to hear his lectures or sermons; a very few chaplains obtain a happier social worship in which many take part.

(d) Christian Officers.

The social problem in army circles is one, like the race problem, *among us* difficult to deal with. Where the commanding officer is a positive and active Christian man and his chaplain like him, the Christian work of the garrison is easier, though not then without its difficulties and limitations; for as a practical fact it is seldom the case that the different elements which I have named can be so mingled as to work happily and heartily together.

Where there is no chaplain and the commanding officer is a positive and active Christian, he will when at all possible, see to it that the people under his charge have some sort of religious



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Our Catholic brethren generally find less difficulty with their adherents in a garrison than do other Christians. Their people are habitually more regular and more devoted and less inclined to aristocratic differences in all that pertains to their public worship. This is something that other Christians will have to learn from them.

2nd. Remedy.

In view of the hints that I have given as to the present status, Can any help be brought to bear to remedy what is unfavorable in our condition ?

(e) Council of Administration.

Gen. Schofield has suggested substantially that what he would call the " council of administration" take under consideration the religious wants of the garrison and provide for them to the extent of such appropriations as Congress may from time to time give for that purpose.

By this means, the right sort of literature could be provided, rooms for a chapel set apart for religious service, and clergymen of fitness and ability secured. Sometimes our ablest men - ministers of



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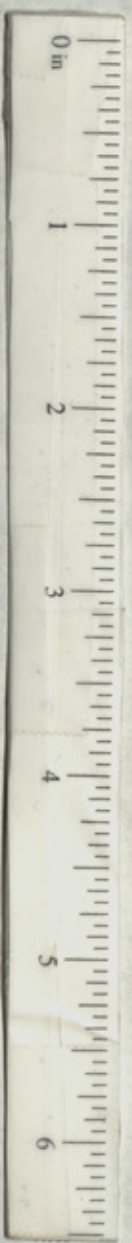
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By this means, the right sort of literature could be provided, some for a chapel and some for religious services, and a degree of fitness and ability secured. Some are our subject men - ministers of





Christ - could be employed during the few months of their vacation. Catholics could have their own, and other Christians such ministers as would suit them. In this way, every garrison by reasonable appropriations of Congress would be <sup>somewhat</sup> provided for. This I understand to be the General's recommendation. Probably not interfering at all where there were good chaplains adapted to the work of their posts.

These suggestions have commended themselves to my judgment as at least an alleviation of the present want.

(f) An Enlarged and Organized Chaplaincy.

Another proposition has been made by our chaplains and warmly urged by many Christian bodies to revise and extend the chaplaincy itself until the whole field shall be covered. After long observation and much thought, I am sorry to say that I am afraid of this official method because the chaplaincy has been made to appear to weary, overworked, or sick clergymen as a haven of rest. These latter and their political friends seek appointments and too often obtain them, whereas the chaplain best fitted is a man of strength and health and energy, who understands fully what it is to lead a selfdenying, unselfish Christian life. The chaplain above all other Christian ministers wants to be a man to convert souls and to upbuild and develop men in the Christian household of faith. Of course it would be delightful







to have an enlarged and efficient chaplaincy were it politically possible; but I am afraid it is not.

(g) Favorable Circumstances.

It is a mistake to suppose that the officers of the army are unchristian. I do not believe that the majority of them are unchristian to-day. They are neither infidels nor atheists. Those who are not in open communion with the churches in some of its branches are generally like men outside the army - no better, perhaps, and no worse.

The army enforces obedience to regulation and law. It restrains from indulgence in sinful pleasures. Its steady discipline and its morals attained throughout will compare favorably with the same of the railroad bodies of employer and employed.

It is a common mistake to suppose that there is a great amount of idleness in all the army in time of peace. Duty demands much work every day, and the soldier has but few hours of leisure. The officer cannot pass from grade to grade without a severe and serious examination. Almost never do we find an officer of the army an idle man; yet, you say few seem to be pronounced and active Christian men! Probably, however, the number of these is as great as among other bodies of men - for example, the railroad employees, the young



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in the same way. You may find some to be promoted and even to this  
day. However, the number of these is as great as among  
other bodies of men - for example, the railroad employees, the young



men in the schools and colleges, commercial travellers or the medical bodies. Comparisons, however, which are irritating, are not necessary. There is want everywhere in all these bodies and in all the churches, of Christian activity. Absorption in business, or competition which involves a struggle for existence, a pitting of man against man, keep the most of people from exercising the functions of that Christian brotherhood which in all our hearts we ardently desire.

There is want everywhere, and that want is strongly felt in the army - the want of a better realization of the higher privileges of Christian manhood.

### 3 (g) The Y. M. C. A. Method of Help.

Now, perhaps, our Y. M. C. A. brethren have attained a method that can reach the garrisons, however distant, however remote. But it will not do to leave such a work to voluntary effort. What I would propose would be a judicious secretary, and the secretary should have sufficient compensation to enable him to be freed from the discharge of other duties. A secretary who shall be like your own secretaries. He is generally a man who understands how to deal with men and who is filled with the Holy Spirit. Sometimes it would be possible to find a suitable Lieutenant who had belonged to the Y. M. C. A. at West Point who would be willing to use his extra time for the organization and the extension of your work; but even here it would be better to



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### 3 (e) The N. C. A. method of help

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obtain a civilian secretary of the right stamp to associate such a Lieut. with himself, securing his aid and co-operation. I would say the same of any conscientious commanding officer.

At Fortress Monroe, a quartermaster, Col. Bird, succeeded in gathering an excellent Association, but he would have been much aided, and his work probably been doubled, could he have had a "Warburton" with him to devote his whole time and attention to the Christian work of the garrison at Fortress Monroe.

The secretary of the right sort would manage to have Christian teaching for the non-commissioned officers and their families; the employees and their families; and the officers and their families. Would this young man be better for the work than a chaplain? I think he would at any garrison for the reason of his enlarged position. He would introduce pure places of resort; pleasant reading rooms; interesting Bible classes; attractive Gospel meetings; well organized Christian work. He and the chaplain, where there were one, would co-operate. It is difficult for a chaplain, if he is a Roman Catholic to gather together all persuasions. It is no less difficult for a Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Episcopalian to do so; but the Y. M. C. A. secretary, constantly making an effort to reach absolute Catholicity and having no denominational fetters to his feet will manage to reach and carry benefits and blessings, if not to all, to very many of every kind, of every name. There is nothing







better than bona fide Catholicity.

4th. Concluding Remarks.

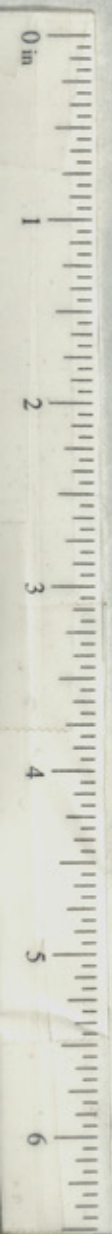
It is difficult to speak of the army or of Christianity in the army, without being misunderstood. There are some things that can only be properly judged <sup>or known</sup> from the inside, - from experience. It is so with all that pertains to our holy religion. Scripture itself cannot be understood by any man until his heart is changed. Then things that were dark become light. When an officer or a soldier shall have moved out of the darkness into the Light, then he will understand why it is that you have been so anxious, so zealous that something be done to bring the Light of Truth within the reach of every soul in every garrison of our little army.



better than this is the only way.

Conclusion

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The circumstances are in some respects the same as with railroad employees. The garrisons are scattered over our land from East to West, and North to South. We have thirty-four chaplain posts where chaplains are stationed and more or less efficient, but the other posts, sixty in number, are mainly without religious exercises, especially without provision for the soldiers. Many of the garrisons,



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however, are near a city, village or hamlet where there are active Christian churches, and where more or less interest is taken in their welfare, and religious privileges kindly extended to those who have any care for them.

(b) A Garrison or Army Post.

In further considering the condition or status it may be well to take an individual garrison for specific study. The army here is represented in miniature. It has its commanding and staff officers; it has its companies, troops, or batteries with their commissioned officers. The officers have their families. The non-commissioned officers and employees, their families; the other enlisted soldiers, for the most part, can have no families near them, living together in their barracks, with very little if any separation from each other or privacy.

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The "customs of service" above and beyond all military requirements of law and regulations, have divided these people in all their social relations, and this division can, I believe, never be broken while an army remains an army; it is an inheritance from England and from our fathers.

Differing from England and most other nations, religion with us is left to the individual conscience; and all authorities are



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The chaplain himself, where there is one, is greatly troubled. Sometimes he succeeds in gathering a few officers and their families for social worship, but few, if any, soldiers. Sometimes he succeeds in interesting the enlisted men and getting them to hear his lectures or sermons; a very few chaplains obtain a happier social worship in which many take part.

(d) Christian officers.

The social problem in army circles is one, like the race problem, *among us*, difficult to deal with. Where the commanding officer is a positive and active Christian man and his chaplain like him, the Christian work of the garrison is easier, though not then without its difficulties and limitations; for as a practical fact it is seldom the case that the different elements which I have named can be so mingled as to work happily and heartily together.

Where there is no chaplain and the commanding officer is a positive and active Christian, he will when at all possible, see to it that the people under his charge have some sort of religious

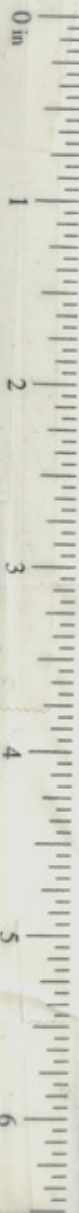


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Privileges. There will at least be a Sunday School for the children, and the soldiers will be granted, if practicable, opportunity to attend divine worship.

Our Catholic brethren generally find less difficulty with their adherents in a garrison than do other Christians. Their people are habitually more regular and more devoted and less inclined to aristocratic differences in all that pertains to their public worship. This is something that other Christians will have to learn from them.

2nd. Remedy.

In view of the hints that I have given as to the present status, Can any help be brought to bear to remedy what is unfavorable in our condition ?

(e) Council of Administration.

Gen. Schofield has suggested substantially that what he would call the " council of administration" take under consideration the religious wants of the garrison and provide for them to the extent of such appropriations as Congress may from time to time give for that purpose.

By this means, the right sort of literature could be provided, rooms for a chapel set apart for religious service, and clergymen of fitness and ability secured. Sometimes our ablest men - ministers of



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Catholics could have their own, and other Christians such ministers as would suit them. In this way, every garrison by reasonable appropriations of Congress would be <sup>some what</sup> provided for. This I understand to be the General's recommendation. Probably not interfering at all where there were good chaplains adapted to the work of their posts.

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(f) An Enlarged and Organized Chaplaincy.

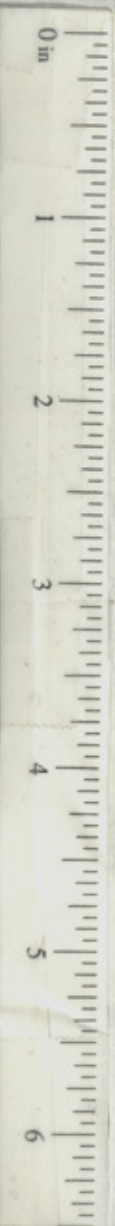
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3rd. (g) Favorable Circumstances.

It is a mistake to suppose that the officers of the army are unchristian. I do not believe that the majority of them are unchristian to-day. They are neither infidels nor atheists. Those who are not in open communion with the churches in some of its branches are generally like men outside the army - no better, perhaps, and no worse.

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It is a common mistake to suppose that there is a great amount of idleness in all the army in time of peace. Duty demands much work every day, and the soldier has but few hours of leisure. The officer cannot pass from grade to grade without a severe and serious examination. Almost never do we find an officer of the army an idle man; yet, you say few seem to be pronounced and active Christian men! Probably, however, the number of these is as great as among other bodies of men - for example, the railroad employees, the young



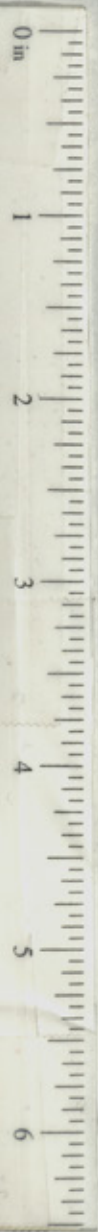
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men in the schools and colleges, commercial travellers or the medical bodies. Comparisons, however, which are irritating, are not necessary. There is want everywhere in all these bodies and in all the churches. of Christian activity. Absorption in business, or competition which involves a struggle for existence, a pitting of man against man, keep the most of people from exercising the functions of that Christian brotherhood which in all our hearts we ardently desire.

There is want everywhere, and that want is strongly felt in the army - the want of a better realization of the higher privileges of Christian manhood.

3 (g) The Y. M. C. A. Method of Help.

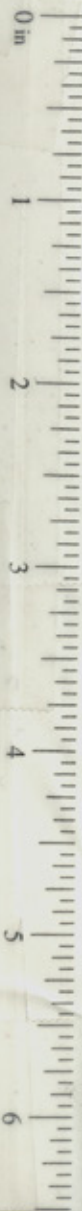
Now, perhaps, our Y. M. C. A. brethren have attained a method that can reach the garrisons; however distant, however remote. But it will not do to leave such a work to voluntary effort. What I would propose would be a judicious secretary, and the secretary should have sufficient compensation to enable him to be freed from the discharge of other duties. A secretary who shall be like your own secretaries. He is generally a man who understands how to deal with men and who is filled with the Holy Spirit. Sometimes it would be possible to find a suitable Lieutenant who had belonged to the Y. M. C. A. at West Point who would be willing to use his extra time for the organization and the extension of your work; but even here it would be better to



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3  
(c) The Y. M. C. A. Method of Help.

Now, however, our Y. M. C. A. workers have attained a method  
that can raise the Christian, however distant, however remote, and  
it will not be to leave such a work to voluntary effort. What I would  
propose would be a trusteeship system, and the secretary should have  
sufficient compensation to enable him to be freed from the demands  
of other duties. A secretary who shall be like your own secretaries,  
he is generally a man who understands how to deal with men and who is  
filled with the holy spirit. Sometimes it would be possible to find  
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point who would be willing to use his experience for the organization  
and the extension of your work. But even here it would be better to





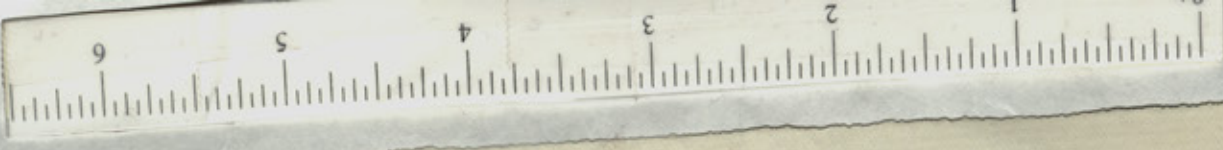
#8

obtain a civilian secretary of the right stamp to associate such a Lieut. with himself, securing his aid and co-operation. I would say the same of any conscientious commanding officer.

At Fortress Monroe, a quartermaster, Col. Bird, succeeded in gathering an excellent Association, but he would have been much aided, and his work probably been doubled, could he have had a "Warburton" with him to devote his whole time and attention to the Christian work of the garrison at Fortress Monroe.

The secretary of the right sort would manage to have Christian teaching for the non-commissioned officers and their families; the employees and their families; and the officers and their families. Would this young man be better for the work than a chaplain? I think he would at any garrison for the reason of his enlarged position. He would introduce pure places of resort; pleasant reading rooms; interesting Bible classes; attractive Gospel meetings; well organized Christian work. He and the chaplain, <sup>were</sup> where there ~~was~~ one, would co-operate. It is difficult for a chaplain, if he is a Roman Catholic to gather together all persuasions. It is no less difficult for a Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Episcopalian to do so; but the Y. M. C. A. secretary, constantly making an effort to reach absolute Catholicity and having no denominational fetters to his feet will manage to reach and carry benefits and blessings, if not to all, to very many of every kind, of every name. There is nothing





better than bona fide Catholicity.

4th. Concluding Remarks.

It is difficult to speak of the army or of Christianity in the army, without being misunderstood. There are some things that can only be properly judged <sup>or known</sup> from the inside, - from experience. It is so with all that pertains to our holy religion. Scripture itself cannot be understood by any man until his heart is changed. Then things that were dark become light. When an officer or a soldier shall have moved out of the darkness into the Light, then he will understand why it is that you have been so anxious, so zealous that something be done to bring the Light of Truth within the reach of every soul in every garrison of our little army.



better than boys' (1890-1891).

Concluding Remarks.

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