

YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION BUILDING, NEW YORK.

YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS.

GOETHE, in his *Wilhelm Meister*, outlines a scheme of a union of men engaged in practical and artist work, who, held together by the ties of fellowship, shall be a brotherhood spread over all lands. He weaves about his pretty plan the flowers of poetry and song; the members are in constant motion, but as they flit to and fro they sing:

“From the mountains to the champaign,
By the glens and hills along,
Come a rustling and a tramping,
Comes a motion as of song;
And this undetermined roving
Brings delight, brings good heed;
And thy striving be it with loving,
And thy living be't in deed.”

But how unlike poetry is to fact! The busiest Bund or union of men engaged in artisan toils is the dreaded *International*, whose fittest symbols are the explosive shell and the torch. It has in past years met in Geneva, but only to take counsel how to overturn society; and yet in this same city was effected in 1878 the combina-

tion of the Young Men's Christian Associations which made them a fellowship for the world. In August, 1881, the convention of associations for all lands, held in London, compacted this world-wide organization. Here, then, we have a new force, which from the simplest beginnings has grown to be most efficacious in promoting good order, good morals, and religion. It is well to place these two “Internationals” side by side in our thoughts, and to dwell upon the possibilities of each. Every force which helps to conserve society is welcome to the citizen and the statesman; and nothing is so effective in conserving social order as the Christian religion.

Briefly stated, a Young Men's Christian Association is a company of men, under forty years of age, holding the principles usually called evangelical, who aim to bring other young men to share in the faith which they cherish. To effect this end, in addition to the direct inculcation of truth, advantage is taken of social ap-

pliances. Music, song, lectures, gymnastics—all that makes the pure and innocent life of the young is utilized for a sacred purpose. Christianity becomes common-sensible, real, personal. Religion is taught as much as possible without the formality of a platform. Teacher and disciple meet on the common ground of the fellowship of youth. Personal interest in young men is the key used to open the heart, and to prepare the way for the admission of the highest truth.

What an advance this is upon the customary formal modes of Christian teaching one can well imagine. The formal method is vital, indispensable; it is the necessary consequence of the existence of the Christian Church as a permanent institution. And yet it has its limitations. It addresses all who come to be taught, but, looking only to the secular interests of society, it is important that the lessons of Christianity should be carried to those who do not come to be taught. Now a Christian Association might readily become a close corporation, limited to young men who have, as one might say, the pass-word, who have already within them the sympathies which an active Christian faith always inspires. To escape this, which would be a fatal error, the members are divided into two classes, the active and the associate. The active are members of evangelical Churches; the associate, young men of good moral character. The one class controls the association, the other enjoys its privileges. The associate members are of all shades of faith; Protestant and Catholic, Jew and Christian, are alike welcome, provided only the one condition, a good moral character, is met. If men in society, according to the old saying, are as pebbles shaken in a bag till all their rough edges are worn away, surely in such a union the asperities and angularities of sectarianism will rapidly disappear. The criticism upon the narrowness of sects has edge and truth, but to the Young Men's Christian Association it hardly applies.

To bind together such a congeries of societies, and to inform them with a common life, has required tact, patience, and uncommon good judgment. The associations are an example of business shrewdness applied to Christian aims. For once worldly wisdom in the best sense has entered into league with Christian simplicity. One can not read the instructions for



GEORGE WILLIAMS, THE FOUNDER OF YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS.

[Photographed by Maull and Co., 62 Cheapside, London.]

the formation of associations without tracing the marks of this wisdom. Some of them run in this wise: "Begin quietly, without mass-meetings." "Avoid debt." "Do not run a race with a lyceum, or any like institution: strike out into new paths." "Build a house that beats the public-house." "Keep out the talking, office-seeking men who are ready to seize upon a new movement so long as it adds to their popularity or gratifies their vanity." "At conventions 'show men' are not needed, nor persons simply who can make a good speech." "Do not depend on large and ambitious meetings to sustain interest in your work." "Put your association room not higher than the second floor, and furnish it as a parlor, and not in a formal manner as a public hall." "Do not engage as an organization in measures of political reform." Such instructions reveal a patient study of the difficulties which are met in the path of every movement, and of the methods by which they are to be overcome. There is a touch of satire in the advice to keep clear of the windy, talking man. What village in our land does not know him? Carlyle, in his *Stump-Orator*, advises that a bit of his tongue be cut off every time he talks without doing. The associations have learned that "all deep talent is a talent to do, and is intrinsically of silent nature." They have a short word



W. E. SHIPTON.—[SEE PAGE 262.]
[Photographed by A. Debenham, Ryde, Isle of Wight.]

for the fussy orator: "Much-talking man, you may go down; your gift is not wanted here."

Let it not be supposed, however, that worldly prudence is the chief quality in the management of these associations. It plays a subordinate part only; underneath it is a fervid zeal for the spiritual welfare of young men. To justify the term "Christian" as a part of their name, the associations have been compelled to frame strict definitions. They have been asked to make good moral character the sole condition of active membership. This is, upon the surface, very reasonable; for what is better than a union of young men of good morals? The proposal has nevertheless been deliberately rejected, and the reasons therefor seem to be sound and convincing. The phrase "good moral character" is vague, to begin with. An applicant for a tavern license must in many of the States be certified to be a person of "good moral character," and such certificates are procured every year by the thousand. As a description it is purely a negation, and is compatible with qualities which unfit one to be a member of a charitable or reformatory body. The young men say well: "An avowed infidel may be a man of good moral character; indeed, there are many such to whose outward lives none can take exception. Yet the whole influence of such men is diametrically opposed

to the chief purpose of our association." How, for instance, could John Stuart Mill and William E. Gladstone have been fellow-members of a society designed to lead men to become Christians? Or William E. Dodge and the most distinguished of American positivists? Unions grow out of some common sentiment, principle, or faith, and in a Christian Association the sentiment, or principle, or faith, relates to Jesus Christ. These societies contemplate a bringing together of young men on the basis of a certain relation of each one to Christ—a relation governed by the revelation of His person which they believe to be found in the Scripture. If this view is held by many Christian Churches, then a union on the basis of it is not unreasonable. And if, besides, this view of Jesus does work out purification of morals, self-control, and active charity, then society is the gainer by its wide-spread acceptance. The more we can persuade men to submit to the power of some divine passion, the more perfectly do we deliver them from the dominion of base passions. We are governed by sentiment, whether domestic, patriotic, or charitable, through the whole gamut of feeling. The love of a national flag is a profound and at times overwhelming sentiment; but the love of the Cross has proved itself for eighteen centuries to be still stronger. Even skeptics must give a recognized place to the primary emotions of Christianity as powerful motors in the advancement of society. If they do not share in them, they can and do treat them with respect.

After several essays at a definition of faith which should serve as a basis, the International Convention held in Portland in 1869 adopted a statement which has been found sufficiently explicit for practical purposes. It is in these words: "As these organizations bear the name of Christian, and profess to be engaged directly in the Saviour's service, so it is clearly their duty to maintain the control and management of all their affairs in the hands of those who profess to love and publicly avow their faith in Jesus, the Redeemer, as Divine, and who testify their faith by becoming and remaining members of Churches held to be evangelical. And we hold those Churches to be evangelical which, maintaining the Holy Scriptures to be the only infallible rule of faith and practice, do believe in the Lord Jesus Christ (the only begotten of the Father,

King of Kings and Lord of Lords, in whom dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and who was made sin for us, though knowing no sin, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree) as the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved from everlasting punishment." Here is a summary of the elementary principles of the Protestant Reformation. Luther could have accepted it, and so could Melancthon, and so could Zwingle, Calvin, Cranmer, and Knox. It is the basis on which the original American commonwealths (if we except Maryland) were founded, and it can not fairly be charged with narrowness, for it embodies the prevalent faith of Protestantism to-day. The basis does undoubtedly exclude many young men from participation in the control of the associations; but the advantages are offered, as before stated, to young men of all faiths, or of no faith. The good-will of the associations is as broad as humanity itself.

For our part, we are disposed to commend in the young men this manly and, withal, sufficiently modest assertion of their principles. Practically it has been found that attempts to form successful associations in disregard of the assertion of distinctive ideas have been failures. Cohesive power has been lacking; good-nature and easy-going kindness have been found insufficient to compact the union. Some power which works upon the conscience can alone carry men through the vicissitudes of Christian work. The disposition to fall off after a few spasmodic efforts, the tendency to disintegration which is found in every voluntary society, the heart-sinkings verging to despair, can only be overcome by the energy of some overmastering conviction. Guizot calls it "a divine passion for souls"; many men of the world call it a delusion. Call it what we will, it is a force which excites to sustained exertion for the welfare of others, and should have a place in every complete and philosophic view of modern society. These young men fearlessly avow their faith: they hoist their flag, and nail it to the mast; nothing could be better. The world always respects manliness, even when it is not convinced; and if the associations did not foster that quality in young men, they would be entitled to no respect. One therefore reads with pleasure in the series of instructions to beginners in association work this one:

"Ask for that you need in a manly, straightforward, Christian way." It is as if one said: "Just as we are, and just what we are, we wish to be seen. No Jesuitism will be encouraged or practiced among us."

Such results as have been reached could only have been achieved through the working of strong elements of personal character. And when results are worldwide, the personal elements must be care-



CEPHAS BRAINARD, CHAIRMAN OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE.

[Photographed by Bogardus, New York.]

fully adjusted to each other. Carlyle, among his many vagaries of thought, counsels a young man of this age to eschew the babblement of the world, and to nourish in solitude his inner life. The thought is a pretty one, but very unsubstantial. The typical heroic man, according to the Carlylean formula, is a John the Baptist, reared in the wilderness, clothed in coarse cloth, and an eater of locusts and wild honey. He comes like an apparition, has no contact with the world save as a reprover of its sins, and vanishes suddenly from sight. But it is found practically that the world's work is done by men, young and old, who are much with their fellows, and who are sensible that their bare individualism is insufficient for the tasks on which their hearts are set. Wesley begins the reformation of England by forming a club; Coleridge, South-



F. VON SCHLUEMENBACH, GERMAN INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY.

[Photographed by Washburn, New Orleans.]

ey, and Wordsworth dream in their early days the dream of a Pantisocracy to be established on the banks of the Susquehanna; the Tractarians of Oxford are banded together by the glowing enthusiasm of youth. The future statesmen of England are now, and always have been, found in the debating-rooms of the great universities. The heroisms of the age are wrought out by men who are dressed in broadcloth. "Where men are, are manners," said the ancient Romans, and men of our age whose attention to decorum gives them an aspect of commonplaceness prove themselves capable of broad views, burning enthusiasm, and administrative skill. Nevertheless, it must be confessed that the founders of the Christian Associations did not foresee the end from the beginning. Their first thought was to meet a present need. A few clerks in one branch of trade in London sought each other's fellowship for daily prayer and counsel. The history has often been traced—an informal gathering became an organized association, and spread first to America, and next to the continent of Europe, until it has become an adjunct of all Protestant life.

The date of this beginning was 1844, and Mr. George Williams, the founder, lives, a hale and vigorous man, old, as years are counted, but still youthful in his Chris-

tian zeal. The original association in London has owed much of its growth to the energy of its long-time secretary, Mr. Shipton, who, now retired from duty, can look back with pleasure upon the fruit of his manifold toils. The example of England was quickly copied on this side of the ocean, and in 1851 there was one formed in Montreal; New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and other cities rapidly followed. In tracing this history we find that brain, the ardor of Christian zeal, and business experience have worked together. For instance, in the city of New York, merchants, bankers, and professional men, such as Cephias Brainard, James Stokes, Jun., Elliot Monroe, William E. Dodge, Jun., have been closely linked with others whose entire lives have been surrendered to this service. But to no one can more be ascribed in the developing of associations in the United States than to Robert R. McBurney, the New York secretary. He wields an unseen power by suggestion, which reaches to the farthest limits of association interests. He may be classed as one of the best examples of quiet, persistent energy. Many will remember the modest quarters of the association in the Bible House in former years. Through the confidence which Mr. McBurney's executive abilities have inspired, the funds have been collected for the erection of the Association Building, which is every way worthy of the conspicuous position it occupies in the city. Here, too, the International Committee have their head-quarters, and from this point as a centre radiates the work among the railway men, the college students, among Germans, in the South and West, and among the Freedmen.

All of these branches from the parent stock have grown without human prevision. Some one has appeared fitted for a special service, the service has called for the man, and the managers have had the sagacity to heed the call. The life of F. Von Schlüemenbach, who has charge of the associations among German young men in the United States, has the same romantic interest as that of William Nast, the founder of the German Methodist Episcopal churches. Nast was a fellow-student with Strauss, was infected with the Straussian skepticism, came to the United States, led for a time an aimless, unsettled life, was led by simple-hearted Christians to doubt his doubt, and to a hearty acceptance of Christian faith. Von

Schluemenbach had adopted an epicurean, atheistic philosophy, had become a leader among like-minded young men of German nationality, but through the earnest expostulation of the late General Albright, of Pennsylvania, and the awakening of the recollections of early years in the father-land, was brought to a better mind. General Albright, who was in war a fearless soldier, and at all times a fearless Christian, introduced the German atheist to his Sunday-school at Mauch Chunk in these terms: "Here is my dear friend Captain Von Schluemenbach—an infidel, by-the-way, who says there is no God—and he is going to speak to you, and tell you there is no God, and to prove it to you." This was a trying position for the German; the songs of the children had awakened tender feeling, and his speech became a confession that he could not believe there was a God, but that if the children knew better than he, they might as well pray for him as for others. Led gently step after step by the general and his wife into the truth, he began a new life.

It is characteristic of the associations that they develop lay activity. General Albright was a lawyer, a bank president, and a man of affairs. New York has given an example of a physician and professor in a medical school who is also one of the most successful of Bible teachers. Dr. William H. Thomson for eleven years has had before him every Sunday afternoon in Association Hall an audience varying from five hundred to seven hundred persons, who have listened to his explanations of the meaning of Scripture. His qualifications for the task of an expositor are unusually good. He is son of the Rev. Dr. William M. Thomson, the author of *The Land and the Book*. His early life was spent in Syria, and as the East has for centuries been unchangeable, he can furnish out of the stores of his memory abundant illustrations of Scripture history. Seated beside a table, on which his arm carelessly leans, using colloquial tones, which derive no advantage from any power of voice, not at all fluent, but, on the contrary, hesitating in utterance, Dr. Thomson has nevertheless learned the secret of holding his audiences. One of the causes of this success is that the lecturer has something to say; another, that he does not "orate." Dr. Thomson believes that Bible history may

be made as interesting as any other. "Take," he says, "the history of the founding of the Christian Church as it is given us in the Acts, and illustrated in the Epistles, and if that subject can not be made more interesting than the history of Greece or of the American Revolution, it will be solely due to the mental vacuity



DR. WILLIAM H. THOMSON.

[Photographed by Rockwood, New York.]

of the teacher himself, who has been emptied by a liturgical reading of the Bible till his ears are dull of hearing." Preachers who speak to nearly empty pews Sunday after Sunday may learn something to their advantage by attending the lectures of Dr. Thomson.

The members of Goethe's poetic Bund were pledged never to spend more than three days in one place. Their law was motion. They learned to sing as they wandered,

"In each land the sun does visit
We are gay, what'er betide."

But Goethe did not live to see the full growth of our modern system of life, especially, if we may so say, the *creation* of classes of men whose whole being is movement. For instance, the commercial travellers already number one hundred thousand in the United States; the railway men, eight hundred thousand. For each of these large classes there is a special association secretary, who acts

under the direction of the Young Men's International Committee. One device adopted is a ticket issued to commercial travellers who are members of Christian



E. D. INGERSOLL, INTERNATIONAL RAILROAD SECRETARY.
[Photographed by E. Decker, Cleveland.]

Associations, through which they are admitted to the privileges of the associations everywhere. Such a ticket is, in a higher than a money sense, a letter of credit. The commercial traveller does not tarry long enough anywhere to make firm ties of fellowship possible; what is done for his behoof must be done instantly. We have the impression that this part of the general scheme of association work is still inchoate, and that the methods now tried have not been well tested. The service given to railway men has the advantage of the support of the great railway corporations. Drill a man, if you will, into a machine, still he must depend, in the last resort, on his own intelligence and will. Sobriety and moral principle contribute their quota toward the production of dividends, and a good workman who is also a good man counts for something in financial estimates. It is important that the hand on the throttle-valve be not guided by a brain muddled with drink. No position, not even leadership in battle, calls more imperatively for firm nerves, well-poised faculties, and entire self-command. Railway corporations have souls enough to know what affects their purses, but we

should fail to do justice to many of the managers of the great lines if we did not concede to them a sincere interest in the welfare of their men. When Mr. William H. Vanderbilt distributed one hundred thousand dollars among the servants of the company of which he is the head, as a token of his appreciation of their fidelity during the week of the riots, he showed his sense of the value of moral principle in men who work for daily wages. There are instances of heroism in the lives of these men, and often in their dying. Bret Harte has told the story of Guild, the engineer on the Boston and Stonington line, who preferred death at his post to an escape with added risk to the lives of the passengers. Guild had been in the habit of signaling to his wife as he passed each midnight by his own house near Providence. The signal was well known to and understood by the people of the city. As Harte tells the story,

“ And then one night it was heard no more,
From Stonington on Rhode Island shore;
And the folks in Providence smiled, and said,
As they turned in their beds, ‘The engineer
Has once forgotten his midnight cheer.’
One only knew,
To his trust true,
Guild lay under his engine dead.”

Heroism is heroism in men begrimed with oil and smoke as well as in men who carry swords and wear epaulets. And if the Christian Associations address the better side of the natures of this large and growing class of workers, they will render an essential service to society. The interest in their welfare has taken a very practical form. Cleveland is the centre from which the work has sprung, although tentative efforts had been made in St. Albans, Vermont, as early as 1854, and in Canada in 1855; its success dates from 1872. Mr. Lang Sheaff became conspicuous in it at Cleveland; in 1877 Mr. E. D. Ingersoll was appointed secretary of the Railway Branch of the Young Men's Christian Associations. So rapidly has this Christian enterprise grown that in 1879 a Convention of the Railway Young Men's Christian Associations was held at Altoona, Pennsylvania. There are now reading-rooms for railroad men at thirty-three railroad centres, of each of which a secretary has charge. An aggregate of \$30,000 is annually appropriated by the companies for this truly Christian labor.

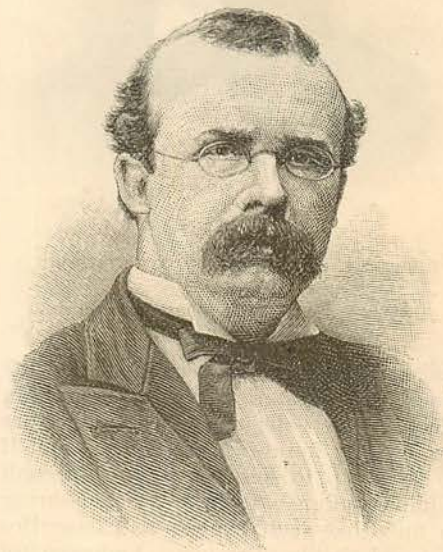
"Mr. Ingersoll," says a leading railway manager, "is indeed a busy man. Night and day he travels. To-day a railroad president wants him here; to-morrow a manager summons him there. He is going like a shuttle back and forth through the country, weaving the web of the Railway Associations."

In Indianapolis twelve railroad companies aid in the support of this work of benevolence. "In Chicago the president of one of the leading roads, the general manager of another, the general superintendent of another, and other officials, have served and are serving actively on the Railway Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association." The stuff these men are made of may be seen from some of their reports to the Altoona Convention. One spoke thus: "About twelve years ago we organized in Stonington, Connecticut, a midnight prayer-meeting of railroad men. It was the hour before the starting of the steamboat night train. The first night one man was soundly converted, and continues to-day a living witness to the truth. After a while the meetings were suspended, and I heard nothing more about railroad meetings until Mr. Ingersoll, the railroad secretary of the International Committee, came down that way. I run a midnight train from Providence, and speak almost every Sunday, and many of our railroad men attend. I am forty-six years of age, and have been twenty-seven years on the road, and four years at sea. My engineer is a Christian man; I feel safe behind him." Are the passengers of the midnight train the worse off because the engineer and conductor are such men as these are? A railroad secretary who represented Indianapolis said: "A member of our association was killed last week, and I was called on to bury him. It was a very sad duty. He was a Christian boy, and there are men here who have heard him pray. Going home from the funeral, one of the boys, not a Christian, said, 'The Railroad Christian Association is doing more for our railroad men than anything else in the world.'"

Some may suppose that the books provided in the railroad reading-rooms are wholly of the goody-good species. The Bible is there, and is made the text-book in the Bible classes, and devotional works do their precious office. But these men have active brains, and are Americans.

A secretary says of them: "One of the first things they call for is railroad works. I am surprised to find how many inquire for mechanical works, and for that reason I am particular to have railroad papers, the *Scientific American*, etc., on our tables. These are read more than the dailies. If the men know they are going to get something that will help in working up to a higher position, they will come to our rooms." Among the books called for as desirable for the libraries are Bourne's *Hand-Book of the Steam-Engine*, Balfour Stewart's *Conservation of Energy*, Pope's *Modern Practice of the Telegraph*; and along with these such strong meat as Henry's *Commentary*, Conybeare and Howson's *St. Paul*, Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, etc.

"Wherever there are young men, there is our field," appears to be the formula under which the Christian Associations



L. D. WISHARD, COLLEGE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY.
[Photographed by Alman and Co., New York.]

work. Of all young men those in colleges are the most important to the future of the world. They are the predestined leaders in church and state. How to obtain access to colleges might have been a puzzling problem, but the initiative was assumed by students themselves. About the close of 1876, the Philadelphian Society of Princeton became, by a change in its constitution, a Young Men's Christian

Association, and took the lead in inviting college delegates to the International Convention which was held in Louisville in 1877. Mr. L. D. Wishard graduated in Princeton that year; twenty-two colleges were represented in the convention, and their delegates asked for Mr. Wishard's appointment as college association secretary. Here was an entry into a new world, a world governed by its own laws,



THOMAS K. CREE, TRAVELLING INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY.

[Photographed by F. Gutekunst, Philadelphia.]

and separated by its peculiar inner life from the greater world without. In reaching the colleges the association has reached the fountains of thought, and if it can help to keep them pure, it will achieve a mighty result. It is re-assuring to find that such leaders as Chancellor Howard Crosby, President Anderson (of Rochester), and Chancellor Haven (of Syracuse) agree in the opinion that essential Christian belief has not declined in American colleges. President Anderson says: "I find no weakening of Christian belief among the young men in our colleges. There is undoubtedly less reverence for the mere scholastic and dogmatic forms which were of old identified with Christianity; but I believe that young men are as responsive to moral and religious motives and considerations as they were when I was in college." One who looks only at the externals of American college

life, at the enthusiasm for physical culture, at the boat-racing, with its excessive excitements, at the craze for the production of mere animal vigor, would hesitate to accept President Anderson's cheerful diagnosis. We have gone far from the simple maxim of Isocrates, "Exercise not for strength, but for health." Fond parents expend thousands, under the fostering care of wise professors, to be sure, for the production of brawn and muscle, plus a degree of A.B. The brawn and muscle can be more than rivalled at the nearest butcher's stall, and the diploma ought, if it were candid, to state that the *ingenuus juvenis* can outrow any sailor or fisherman on river or coast, and that his ever-to-be-venerated Alma Mater certifies to that fact. In truth, we have rushed from the one extreme of neglect of physical culture to its opposite. Perhaps before long we may hit the golden mean, and send out from the colleges, not sporadically, but continually, men in whom intellectual vigor is braced by solid muscles and well-hardened nerves. Schools of learning exist for the breeding of scholars, for the increase of culture, and he alone is worthy of the laurel who has excelled in the liberal arts. The Christian Association can do an essential service to our colleges by allying itself with what there is in them of earnest moral purpose, and by invigorating that purpose through the sanctions of religion.

Let us, however, be just. In the American colleges there are thirty thousand students who are avowed Christians; that is, who accept the obligations of Christian duty. The college Christian Associations now number one hundred and twenty. And when we add to the colleges the State normal schools and the professional schools, it will be perceived that the field is broad enough to employ the utmost energy of all the Christian workers found therein.

It might be suspected that the wide extension of these labors would end in a breaking down of the system by its own weight. So far, organizing talent has not failed; indeed, the skill with which this intricate interlacing of associations is kept from entanglement is one of the surprises of the student of association history. It would be strange if the associations had not made an effort to help toward the solution of the great problem of American life in the present time—the raising up of

the freedmen to intelligent self-control. Throughout this field the work is in its incipient state. The secretary for colored young men is Mr. H. E. Brown, a graduate of Oberlin College, Ohio, who has also spent some years as a teacher among his people at Talladega College, Alabama. It augurs well for the success of his mission that he relies for success upon the teaching of the Bible. Not by windy oratory, not by filling the imaginations of the freedmen with impossible hopes, can they be lifted to the plane on which we wish to see them as American citizens stand. The statesman may supply favorable conditions, but the Bible teacher only is the bearer of the truth which can quicken them into intellectual and moral life. Mr. Brown is in his method quiet and didactic, but also sympathetic, and succeeds in arousing enthusiasm for Bible study among colored young men. But labor in the South is not confined to colored young men. Long before the exasperation between North and South had subsided, a venture was made to reach Southern young men, and was successful. The secretary was welcomed; a convention, in which fraternal feeling was aroused on both sides, was held in Richmond. Since then a secretary, Mr. Thomas K. Cree, has been constantly employed in the Southern States. There are now associations in many of the principal cities from Louisville to New Orleans. In 1879 the association in New Orleans distinguished itself by the devotion of its members to the sufferers from the yellow fever. In 1870 there were but three associations between Virginia and Texas; now there are one hundred and forty-five, and the number still goes on increasing.

The progress of our civilization across the continent carries along on its front, as does the flooded Western river, the scum and drift-wood. The uneasy, the restless, the outlawed, are quickly caught up and swept along. Wherever the railway is planting its foot of iron in the wilderness, there the worst elements of American life are gathered about it. It would be strange if Christian enterprise did not follow hard after, and establish in each newly opened world the institutions of Christianity. In the year 1868, Mr. S. A. Kean, of Chicago, urged the Detroit Convention to send a secretary to the young men employed on the line of the Pacific Railroad. A graduate of a Pennsylvania university, Mr.



RICHARD C. MORSE, GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.
[Photographed by Sarony, New York.]

Robert Weidensall, was found working in the shops of the Pacific Railroad Company at Omaha. He had intended to enter the ministry, but his health had failed, and he had turned to manual labor. The secretaryship for the Pacific Railroad soon became a secretaryship for the States west of the Ohio. In thirteen years a striking change has been wrought. Then throughout this vast area there were thirty-nine associations, now there are two hundred and fifty; then there were no association buildings, now there are six. In 1868 the sum of \$29,000 was contributed to support the thirty-nine associations; in 1881 the sum of \$130,000 was contributed. Now there are also State committees, State secretaries, and all the mechanism of a complete organization.

It is now time to consider the methods by which these results have been attained. Enthusiasm alone will not account for them. A brief outburst of Christian zeal may form an association of young men, but the cohesive force of the bond is very slight. In point of fact, moral societies, outside of churches, fall to pieces very easily; the wonder is that many of them live from year to year. That the Christian Associations have lived for a generation, and have grown so steadily, is due to two facts: they meet a permanent want, and they have been brought into unity with unusual skill. According to their



CHARLES FERMAUD, GENERAL SECRETARY.
[Photographed by Émile Pricam, Geneva.]

own account, their history is divisible into three periods. The first is called the period of confederation, and extends from 1854 to 1861. The former date marks the first annual Convention of the associations of the United States and the British Provinces, held at Buffalo. This was the time of infancy; the associations were experiments, and were learning what could and what could not be done. The second period is that of the civil war, from 1861 to 1864. The war changed at once the labors of the associations; the army, which absorbed the young men of the country, became the objective point. Army committees were formed, first for Christian labor among the recruits encamped about the city of New York, and then for service in the field. A convention of delegates from the Young Men's Christian Associations formed the United States Christian Commission, which, as has been well said, was one of the most beneficent agencies ever devised to alleviate the miseries and horrors of war. "It served as the medium by which the Christian homes, churches, and communities of the country sent spiritual and material comfort to the soldiers in the field and the hospital." In the four years of war it expended for the benefit of the soldiers two and a half millions in cash, and nearly three millions in stores. To have originated this agency is one of the crowning glories of the Young Men's Christian As-

sociations. They modestly disclaim any credit for its wonderfully wise administration; that belongs to Mr. George H. Stuart and his associates. But the history confirms what Lord Bacon says of young men, that "their invention is more lively than that of old men, and imaginations stream into their minds better, and as it were more divinely." The third period, from 1865 to the present, is the period of development. In 1869 the test of membership was adopted, which led to a sifting, but as well to a closer unity. But the most capital device, which dates from this period, was the formation of an "International Executive Committee," as the organ of the International Conventions. This committee has its head-quarters in New York, and has the supervision of association work throughout America. Its circulars describe the field to be covered in this fashion:

60,000 College Students.
100,000 Commercial Travellers.
500,000 German-speaking Young Men.
500,000 Colored Young Men.
800,000 Railroad Men.
The Young Men in States west of Ohio.
The Young Men of the South.
The Young Men in Canada.
The Young Men's Christian Associations in North America.

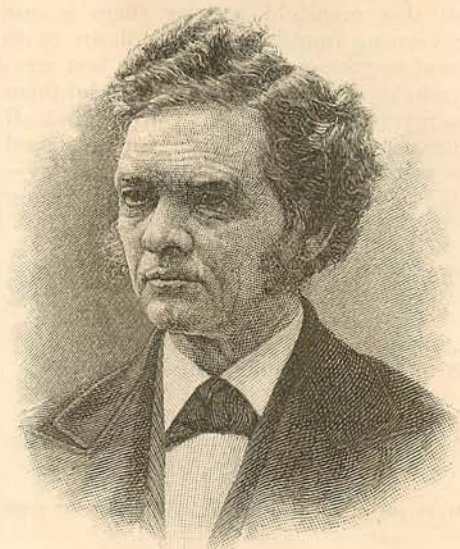
A broad field, certainly; and for all its breadth it is occupied; the young men have entered it bravely, and intend to hold it, as they commonly say, "for their Lord and Master." Since 1866 "the committee has brought up to each successive International Convention a careful report of what has been accomplished under its superintendence, and has submitted a plan, with estimates of cost, for the coming year. After deciding on the general features of the work to be undertaken, the Convention refers it to the Executive Committee, with instructions to perfect the plan in detail, and to carry out its provisions as far as the necessary funds are furnished by the associations and the friends of the cause." Thus far the committee have had but one chief secretary, Mr. Richard C. Morse. Mr. Morse is a graduate of Yale, has the quick, nervous energy peculiar to American young men, and is full of enthusiasm. He believes it to be possible to girdle the globe with Young Men's Christian Associations, and most likely expects to live long enough to see it done. But the International Executive Committee reaches still further.

In each State of our Union and in each province of Canada it has a corresponding member, through whom it reaches State and provincial associations. Under its inspiration, State and provincial conventions are held. Each State is urged to employ a secretary, and each local association a general secretary, both to devote all their time to association labors.

Of course only the strongest associations can afford to support paid agencies. Still there are already one hundred and twenty-one general secretaries and assistants, twelve State secretaries, and eight international secretaries, making one hundred and forty-one in all. Sixty associations in America have buildings, and thirty-seven have building funds and real estate. When Mr. Morse entered upon his duties in 1870, there was but one agent employed by the International Committee; it had no more than \$4700 in hand for all expenditures. It now employs eight special secretaries and three office assistants, and expended in 1880 the sum of \$24,444. This for young men, who are supposed to be remarkably impulsive, is an admirable exhibition of executive power. The many threads are not entangled together, but run up to the few hands of the chosen men of the International Conventions. Each worker has his place, and knows where he is responsible.

But New York is not the sole centre from which association enterprises radiate. Chicago shares this honor. In that city Mr. D. L. Moody began, in the service of the Christian Association, the marvellous evangelism which has spread over Europe and America. In all his diversified labors, Mr. John V. Farwell, of Chicago, the president of the Association, has been his counsellor and friend; the great merchant and the evangelist have been co-workers in city missions; their names have been honorably coupled together in the recent religious history of the Northwest. Geneva, too, the historic city of the Protestant reformers, is a greater centre still. Here is the seat of the World's Central Committee, which aims to link together the system of Christian Associations throughout the world. The secretary of the committee is Mr. Charles Fermaud, who in order to execute the duties of the office has surrendered brilliant business prospects, has travelled over the field in Europe and America, and made his first report to the World's Convention of All

Associations, held in London, in August, 1881. The work put in charge of the Central Committee is both comprehensive and practical. In the schedule we



J. V. FARWELL, PRESIDENT OF CHICAGO ASSOCIATION.

notice one item which is certainly original: "To create an international agency of information for young men." That will be much to do: the associations have so uniformly accomplished what they have taken in hand that one need not despair of their success here. Mr. Fermaud has spent three years in examining the associations of French and German Switzerland, America, England, Scotland, and Ireland, France, Belgium, Alsace-Lorraine, Prussia, and finally Spain. One gets a glimpse of European life in the incidental statement that while thus occupied in official duty Mr. Fermaud had to obey the summons to perform military service for two months, in accordance with the requirements of Swiss law.

These are some of the outgrowths of the little union of young men effected by Mr. George Williams in 1844. Few men have lived to see for themselves such an outcome from the beginnings they have themselves made. We can best show the fruit by coming back to one association building—that of New York. Every secular day more than eight hundred persons enter its open doors. To the reading-room over one hundred thousand persons come every year; into the library and

gymnasium, one-third as many. Over two thousand meetings, religious or secular, are held in the same space of time—that is, six each day. It is a busy scene; there is no haste, but there is no rest. In all this manifold activity there is one governing impulse only: the desire to do good to young men. That the best service to be rendered to them is to lead them to revere and love Jesus Christ; that all innocent and rational means may be used as ministrant to this highest ministry—this is the simple creed of the Young

Men's Christian Associations. In this vast complexity of agencies not one of them is employed with a malevolent purpose. If selfishness creeps in, it is an alien; for it is rebuked by the lofty ideal which the young men have set before them. To the gospel of selfishness they can oppose a better. To every young man they do, in point of fact, present the appeal:

“And thy striving be it with loving,
And thy living deed on deed.”

THE SEARCH.

I HAD a vision of a maiden fair,
With lilies garlanding her sunny hair.

Such gracious loveliness I ne'er had seen,
Such thoughtful tender smiles, such eyes serene.

Methought a voice, thus: “Win her for your guest,
For where she dwells, the roof-tree shall be blest.”

Thenceforth I sought her, tireless, yet in vain,
And all my quest but brought me deeper pain.

I toiled for gold and won it, for I thought
That thus her favor might perhaps be bought.

A stately palace rose at my command,
Its fair proportions hope and fancy planned;

Gems, pictures, statues, all the world calls fair,
In 'wilderung profusion gathered there.

Lawn, wood, and terrace added beauty lent
To grace this fair domain. Long hours I spent

In fruitless watching—she I longed to claim,
Beneath its sculptured doorway never came.

So all distasteful grew my palace then,
And to the busy world I turned again.

But now for place, for power, alone I sought,
And keen endeavor favoring answer wrought.

Honors and titles woke my hopes anew,
“For she,” I said, “shall share these honors too.”

Alas! she never deigned to share my throne,
And triumphs wearied when enjoyed alone.

Once more I strove, but Fame allured me now:
I coveted the bay leaves for my brow.

The way was rough, was steep, but fearlessly
I climbed, until my guerdon I could see.

Then as I seized it, on my raptured sight
One moment shone her garments soft and bright.

One moment only, for the passing gleam
Faded so fast I thought it all a dream.

Worn now with striving, saddened by defeat,
Wealth, rank, and fame proved useless, incomplete,

I left the fruitless search so long pursued,
And hid my grieving heart in solitude.

Little by little, as the years went past,
They soothed and strengthened me, till at last

I could forget myself, and so could see
What duties waited for my ministry.

Each day among the sick and poor I went,
Till all my thoughts on others' cares were bent,

And all my tears on others' griefs bestowed,
If haply I might share the heaviest load.

Homeward I hastened once at close of day,
Brightly the sunset glory lit my way;

Still when I reached my humble cottage door
A rare effulgence touched what'er I saw;

And in the midst—oh! joy almost too bright!—
I saw the graceful figure, pure and white,

The flower-crowned tresses and the glance serene,
And knew that I had found my longed-for queen!