

HISTORICAL SKETCH

Some Account of the Organization and Growth of the Association.

Although the records do not show who proposed the organization of the association in our university, yet by inquiry we have found that it was either our beloved Dr. B. L. Paine or R. L. Marsh of the class of '84. The first notice we have in the records is "Minutes of Meetings," and under the date of February 22, 1882, we have: "Business meeting called to order, President in chair." So we must conclude they had some time prior to this formed an organization. But the association constitution was not adopted until March 15, 1882.

The association continued to work under this constitution until October 1, 1884, when a new one was adopted.

The organization of the Y. M. C. A. in the university on September 27, 1884, by L. D. Wishard, was the cause of this change. The minutes say that "Bro. L. D. Wishard organized a Young Woman's Christian Association, with the young ladies of the association and many who had not belonged to that association."

Before this time all meetings had been held together, and they continued to be so for some time. The change to separate meetings was slow and was deemed worthy of frequent mention in the minutes. It was not until 1887 that an exclusively men's meeting was started. It was held on Saturday evenings in room No. 3. The minutes of the meeting for October 13, 1888, says: "Time mostly taken up by prayer, etc."

Professor Hitchcock held a Sunday morning bible class for the first year. Besides this there was a meeting on Wednesday evenings which was led by some member of the association. I was much interested in the minutes of the meeting for September 24, 1884, which are as follows: "21 there, Dr. Paine included."

They seem to have had their difficulties, for we find that they had no meetings because the janitor forgot to open the doors, and again they complain because a social was interrupted by his turning off the gas.

It is also evident that they had some of the same difficulties to deal with that we have to meet, for the minutes of May 16, 1888, say: "Three persons present when the meeting began. But twenty came in before meeting closed."

The officers of the association were elected only for a term corresponding to a school term until 1888, since when they have been elected for one year. In 1892 the constitution was again changed to its present form in regard to the time of electing officers and the length of their term.

There were but three standing committees at first—the membership, devotional and missionary. This number has been gradually increased until now we have standing committees on bible study, finance, printing and advertising, calling and relief, ushering and rooms, music, intercollegiate relations, daily prayer meetings, handbook, annual address, Lake Geneva.

Convention time has always been one of enthusiasm for the association and we find at first, as now, something extra was expected from those who were privileged to attend these meetings of Christian men. They expected them to come home full of enthusiasm and plans for furthering the Master's kingdom in the university. To show part of what we expect of our delegates I will give the effect of the convention of '84 on one of the association members of that time. It was at the Sunday meeting following the convention, and after the program it is said: "Roy Coddling, being full of the convention, talked for a minute or two."

There were twenty-five charter members of the association. Nine of these were women. When the new constitution was adopted the membership in the Y. M. C. A. was twenty-three. This has gradually increased, until now we have a membership of 287, fifty-four of whom are in bible classes.

The finances have always been a source of trouble to the association. When it was organized the membership fee was fixed at 5 cents a month. This was changed in 1885 to 25 cents per term, and then later changed to \$1 per year, as at present. Often the delegates to the state conventions were instructed to pledge \$10 to the state work and find that this occasioned trouble, for in 1884, after the usual instructions had been given, they moved: "Also, that we bestir ourselves and pay up the \$10 we now owe." It was in this year that the precedent, which we follow with such good advantage, was established. I refer to the asking of the faculty to assist us in our work financially. They had such good success that the minutes report within a week after the appointing of the committee that they had received \$5 from the chancellor, but had not seen any more of the faculty yet."

Meetings were held in the chapel and Palladian hall and Dellan hall. In November, 1886, they procured the use of room No. 7 and fixed it up as a Y. M. C. A. and a Y. W. C. A. room at the expense of \$15. However, they

continued to hold their Sunday meetings in the larger halls. After the completion of the conservatory we occupied rooms there until we moved into our present quarters.

The field of the association has been constantly widening and among the new features of the past few years are the annual address, morning watch, band work, Lake Geneva, delegation fall campaign, hand book, and last of all the employment bureau.

I found Lake Geneva first mentioned in the minutes for May, 1892, as follows: Will send Tucker, Tanager, Whaley and Boomer to Lake Geneva."

The years '93 and '94 were years of great advance in the association work of the university.

In May, '93, band work was taken up in an energetic way. A committee was appointed to choose members for the bands. The work has proven to be a success and has become a fixed part of our work.

On June 4, of the year, Hon. W. E. Andrews delivered the first annual address.

At a meeting on October 29, 1893, there was inaugurated in the university a movement which has touched the deeper life of the members of the association more than any other movement. I refer to the "morning watch," and this custom, which was a source of blessing to them, has been handed down to us with all its benefits.

The committee on handbook is first mentioned in April, '94, and in October of the same year is the first mention of the fall campaign.

In 1896 we find that the mission work was being pushed vigorously. It was also during this year that the college settlement was first discussed.

IMPROVEMENTS.

Marks of Material Progress During the Past Year.

Nothing, perhaps shows the life and activity of the association better than the improvements that have been made during the past year. The Y. M. C. A. boys were "long suffering." They trudged down the cellar stairs, through that dark, narrow passage for a long time without a murmur, for they realized the cramped condition of the university. When the new building was erected and finished, the boys became less forbearing and as they saw the different departments move into the commodious new building a spirit of discontent was discovered and this spirit soon expressed itself in words, when a plea was made to the chancellor and regents. Here hearty co-operation was found and in a short time the room, immediately east of the one so long occupied, was given to the association. Only those who knew the condition of the rooms as they existed at the opening of the school room can appreciate the new ones.

A great door has been put in, thus relieving the boys of embarrassment in bringing their friends to the rooms. The walls and ceilings have been beautifully frescoed, new rugs and furniture have been secured and in all the rooms present a beautiful appearance. "The Old Swearing Room" has been torn away. Tradition says that here is where the president and members of the cabinet

said that this was the most successful social event in the association's history.

A large number of visitors were present, some men of national reputation as Y. M. C. A. workers, among whom may be mentioned C. C. Minchener of Chicago, and C. S. Ward of Minneapolis. Both of these men are members of the international committee and their visit to the local association has meant much to our work. At this dinner men were impressed as never before of the great brotherhood of which they were a part. The need of active work, while in college was born into the minds of the men. An effort has also been made to unify the membership and workers. At this dinner men were surprised at their own force and it did much to bring the committeemen into an organized body. The committeemen's conference recently held was of the same nature as the dinner. At this time forty-five committeemen sat for three hours in earnest discussion of association problems. Difficulties peculiar to the University of Nebraska were taken up and problems which had often seemed beyond solution were earnestly considered by that strong class of men. It was found at these two gatherings that men had been thinking of the association work, but had hesitated to express their plans and suggestions. The dinner and conference has put the work in a new light before the men. They now feel that the association problems are not for a few to solve, but for the whole working force to consider and act upon. The association will continue this policy in the coming year with greater vigor. Already the great good of

and plans that might be put into use the coming year.

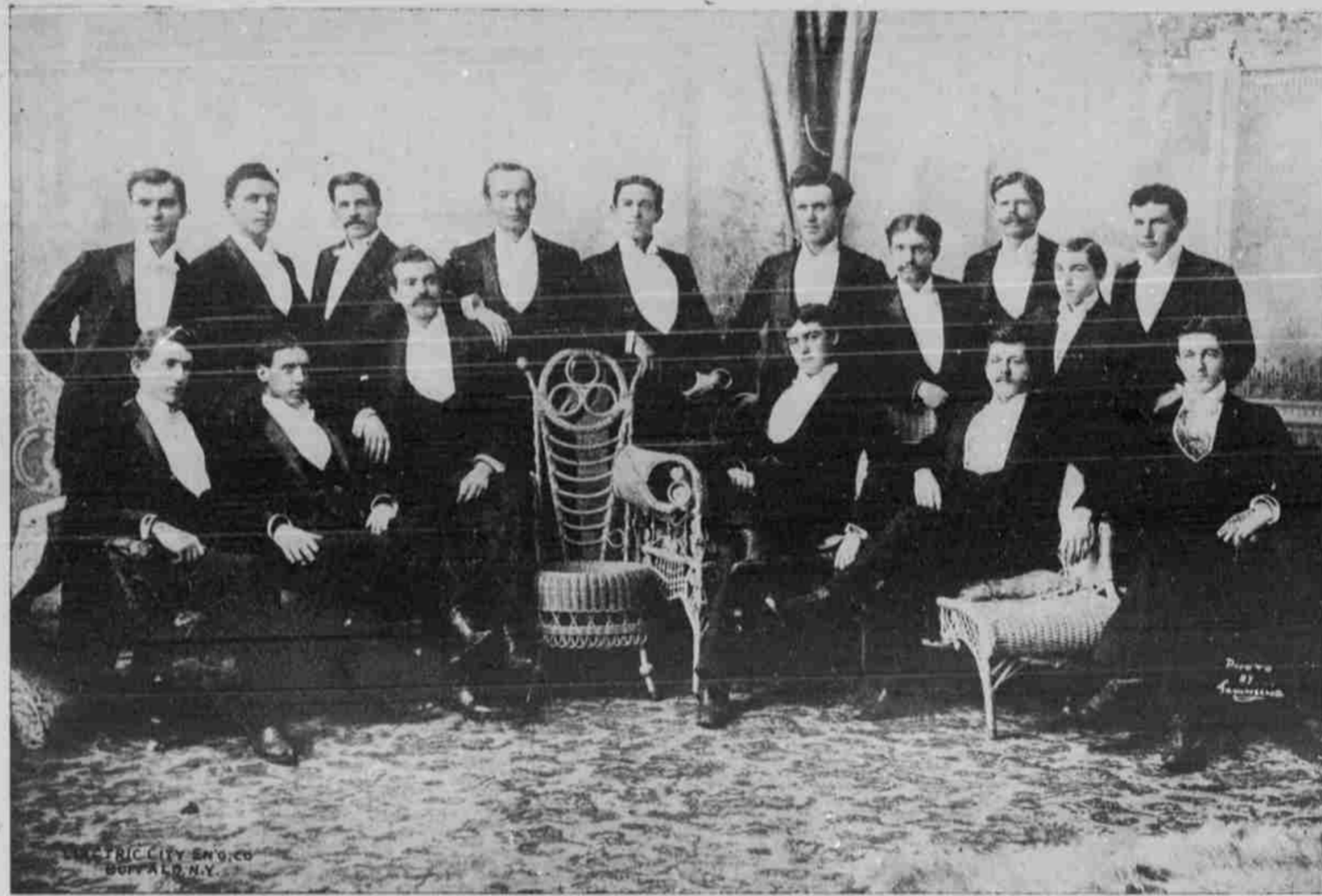
The work of the committees in general was presented by C. J. Allen. Mr. Allen's long service in the association and his familiarity with all phases of committee organization and work gave especial weight to all of his recommendations. The more important of his suggestions were that the personnel of the committee should be as representative as possible, that there should be perfect harmony between the chairman and the members of the committee, and that the chairman of the committee should not assume too much responsibility himself, but rather give those under him plenty to do and make them responsible for the work in part.

Professor F. G. Franklin followed Mr. Allen, giving some of his personal recollections of John R. Mott, the great Y. M. C. A. worker. Professor Franklin and Mr. Mott were classmates in Cornell university, and they were very intimately connected with each other. The rare ability of Mott as an organizer and director was set forth in a very interesting way by the professor.

J. E. Boyle spoke of the Y. M. C. A. as a helpful factor in university life. He spoke in a general way of the different lines of work carried on by the association, and of the bearing of this work on the men who come into contact with it. Mr. Boyle's paper led to perhaps the most interesting discussion of the afternoon.

General Secretary Moore was to have discussed a topic, but the lateness of the hour led him to defer it until some other time.

The dinner which followed the pre-



ASSOCIATION GLEE CLUB, '98.

The association has from its founding been favored by the counsel and aid of Godly men in our faculty, ministers and laymen of the city, and also the state secretaries and the secretaries of the international committee. We have had with us at various times, Nash, Ober, Mott, Dr. Knapp, Gates, Ward, and it was through the advice and aid of Mr. Minchener, who was with us last year, that we were enabled to make our latest movement forward.

Last year the officers of our association, after much prayer and counsel, determined that we, as an association, should move forward to a greater work and to a larger field than we had ever occupied before. It was the following of the plans which they formulated that led to the changing of our constitution, so that now the association work in the university is on a firm basis. With our board of control, composed of students, professors and two business men of Lincoln to direct the work, and the general secretary, who has general supervision, we ought to move forward to greater victories for our Christ than any we have yet achieved.

The work of the present school year opened up most auspiciously, and has exceeded even our highest ambitions. Last fall the regents kindly granted us another room, which has been furnished from the proceeds of an entertainment held recently. At our committeemen's dinner Chancellor MacLean promised us an outside entrance and when we returned from our Christmas recess we found it already in. The opening of our new quarters occurred some weeks ago. The boys that night gave us a present of twenty-five dollars, which is being used in buying needed furniture.

Our committees are busily engaged in perfecting plans for the work next year, which we expect to make even more productive of good than has been in the past one.

LUCIAN J. MARSH.

would seclude themselves when committees refused to work.

A president or cabinet officer has never been found who would say that he has ever sworn while in this historic corner. If none are guilty, a great many of the members, present and past, would like to know how the room came to bear such a name. The attendance at the rooms has almost doubled in the past year. They are fast becoming, as they should be, the common meeting place of the eleven hundred young men in the university. One feature recently added to the rooms is free ink to the membership of the association. This ink is provided by the Parker Pen company of Jamesville, Wis., and is proving to be a thing of great convenience. It is the purpose that more improvements shall be added at the opening of the coming school. It is hoped to place in the main reception room about one hundred lockers where the boys can leave their books with safety during class hours. The rooms are always kept neat and clean and are always open to young men in the university regardless of membership in the association.

THE COMMITTEEMEN'S DINNER.

There is no line of work more important in the association than the training of men. To make each member feel that he has a part in the organization, to make each man feel a responsibility, is one of the difficult tasks before the Y. M. C. A. It was a part of the definite policy of the association last year to enlarge the committees' use, great care in the selection of men and then have each committeeman do some definite work or give way to another who would assist. The plan, as adopted, has succeeded beyond all expectations. The committeemen's dinner given at the conservatory of music December 9, 1898, did more to bring about this happy state of affairs than any other event of the year and it may be truly

educating the men along progressive lines has been discovered and no pains will be spared to make all the membership and individual workers perfectly familiar with all phases of the work. Another conference will be held this year when all committees will organize into one large force in preparation for the work for new students. This will be discussed and an attempt will be made to have a large number of workers on the ground early when school opens the coming year.

It is the intention to make the work for new students coming in next year the most effective that it has ever been.

THE COMMITTEEMEN'S CONFERENCE.

Saturday afternoon and evening, April 22, the Y. M. C. A. had a committeemen's meeting and dinner in its rooms in the main building. A large majority of the men serving on the different committees were present and the meeting proved to be a very profitable one. The work of the committee and plans for the general welfare of the association were presented by different leaders in the work, and the discussion that followed the presentation of each subject was interesting and spirited. Before the year closes it is hoped that a meeting of a similar nature may be held to further consider the association and its needs.

In opening the meeting J. J. King, the new president of the association, made a few general remarks, making reference, among other things, to the work of the organization for the coming year.

J. L. Sheldon, who has had the bible study work in charge during the past year, made a short talk in which he put forth in an effective way the importance and claims of Bible study

and their discussion was both excellent and abundant.

ATTITUDE OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS TOWARD Y. M. C. A.

A discussion of the condition of the Y. M. C. A. at present and its work in the past would be incomplete without due regard to the encouragement and substantial assistance that has been rendered by other organizations and the management of the university.

The fraternities have opened their houses for receptions and social gatherings, and shown courtesies to the organization in many ways. The literary societies have opened their halls and welcomed the Y. M. C. A. boys upon many occasions.

Too much cannot be said of what has been done by the chancellor. Upon all occasions he has shown the keenest interest in the work and has proven to be one of the best advisers in the university. Upon all lines of work the chancellor is interested in the moral development of the young men, and for this reason is only too glad to assist any organization that is working along this line.

To individualize the members of the faculty who have assisted in the work and who have helped to put it where it is would require the whole issue, suffice it to say that all teachers are interested in this work that is doing so much among our young men.

The favors shown by those in the executive offices and those employed upon the campus, have been appreciated and it is hoped the Young Men's Christian Association may prove itself worth the many favors which it may now rightfully claim.

All the university publications have opened their columns to notices and reports. This has meant much of the work.