

career, has been Mr. Charles Loring Brace, the present secretary of the society. While pursuing a theological course in New York city, he gave much labor to various institutions, seeking the recovery of neglected vagrant and delinquent children, and to the prisons where mature criminals were confined. A trip to England and other parts of Europe, where he carefully examined the institutions, and the measures formed for the reformation of the fallen, led to the conclusion that the chief evils of society resulted from the neglects of childhood, and that the largest efforts of the philanthropist should be bent in this direction. Some time after his return he drew together a number of intelligent and benevolent gentlemen who had already manifested an interest in this subject, and organized this society, the object being to "improve the condition of the poor and destitute children of the city of New York." One outside of this city would be surprised to know how large a number of little orphans and half-orphans, children cast out from their homes, or who have drifted here by the tide of emigration, or have run away from their parents in the surrounding country, and the offspring of dissolute parents, are here living vagabond lives, subsisting as best they can, sleeping in boxes, under stairways, and in the lobbies of the printing offices.

These are at first the newsboys, boot-blacks, peddlers, errand-boys, petty thieves, but become at a later period the pick-pockets, gamblers, street loafers, burglars, and prostitutes. There are always probably ten thousand of this class floating around the city, a few of whom try to be honest and industrious, but many more live entirely by their wit and skill. The society during the eighteen years of its operations has expended, aside from its purchases of real estate, about \$940,000. It has devised and opened a system of lodging-houses for the boys, and also for homeless girls, and has at present twenty-two industrial schools, scattered through the various parts of the city, for poor and neglected girls. The homeless, after some instruction, are taken to the West, if they can be induced to go, where good situations are provided. The experiment of opening a lodging-house for newsboys and boot-blacks was so novel, that scarcely any could be found to encourage the measure, and much search was required to find a building that could be hired for such use. At length the loft of the Sun Building was secured, and after spending a thousand dollars in furnishing it, the boys were invited to

come in. The first night, March 18, 1854, the room was crowded with these wild, ragged roughs, many of whom were hatless, bootless, indescribably filthy, and covered with vermin, a large part of them unable to read or write, and some of whom did not know their nationality or names. A man of admirable tact and fitness, Mr. C. C. Tracy, had been providentially secured to take charge of this branch of the enterprise. He addressed the boys kindly, and informed them that they were not objects of charity, but were to be considered lodgers in their own hotel, paying six cents each for his bed, the rules of the house being that they should keep order among themselves, and use the bath. They cheered him lustily, and one of the largest boys soon stepped forward and paid for a week's lodging in advance. There was much "larking" and mischief manifested, requiring great patience and wisdom on the part of the superintendent, but with admirable adroitness he soon introduced the Lord's Prayer, which they were induced to repeat, the evening school followed, and finally the full religious service. Many of these boys were found to be earning several dollars per day selling papers, and none of them less than from fifty to seventy-five cents, all of which they squandered on theatres, cards, dice, lottery-tickets, and costly meals in the saloons. To correct these habits, he introduced checkers, backgammon, and other games to keep them from the streets, and contrived what has been a blessing to thousands, the Newsboys' Savings Bank. A table, with a drawer divided into small compartments, with a slit in the surface over each through which the boys could slip their pennies, was prepared, and each box numbered for a depositor. As any undue authority would have sent them flying to their original Arab life, he called them together and explained the object of the bank, to induce them to save their money, and called for a vote as to how long it should be kept locked. They voted for two months. Having obtained a majority vote for a good measure, they were always held strictly to their own law, however deeply they might repent afterwards. The amount saved by some in that time astonished all of them, the value of property was impressed on their minds, some took their accumulations to the city Savings Banks, and others purchased good clothes. This invention did more to destroy their gambling and extravagant tendencies than everything else. A plan for lending penniless boys money to begin business of some kind was introduced.

Sums varying from five to fifty cents were loaned, generally returned the same day, often the same hour, and did much to encourage industry and thrift.

Thus the work of reformation advanced; they became more tidy, industrious, studious, regular in their habits, and serious at divine service. Ministers and other speakers were invited to address them. One has well said, "There is something unspeakably solemn and affecting in the crowded and attentive meeting of these boys, and the thought that you speak for a few minutes on the high themes of eternity to a young audience, who, to-morrow, will be battling with misery, temptation, and sin, in every shape and form, and to whom your words may be the last they ever hear of friendly sympathy or warning." The seed has sometimes sprung up suddenly, and in other instances after many days. At one service a boy addicted to thieving was so impressed that at its close he called the superintendent aside, confessed his crimes, gave up a dark lantern, a wrench, a pistol, and has since filled a good place as an excellent boy. No story of misfortune has ever been presented to the boys without eliciting a generous response and material aid. They contributed to the "Mount Vernon Fund," to the Kansas sufferers, to the Sanitary Commission, and to the relief of sufferers from great fires in the city. Thousands have gone to the country, scarcely any of whom have turned out drunkards, some of them have entered the ministry and the learned professions, and many of them have accumulated property. Many of them are singularly talented; and, being early schooled to tact and self-reliance, they almost invariably succeed in any undertaking. The newsboys and boot-blacks of New York are a new crop each year, ragged and ignorant as their predecessors. So the toil of this society continues from year to year. The society has five lodging-houses at present, the one at No. 49 Park place being the largest, having accommodations for two hundred and fifty. A fund of \$70,000 has been provided to build or purchase a building in that ward. Three of the trustees have recently purchased the building occupied in the Sixteenth ward. It is a four-story brick in Eighteenth street, near Seventh avenue, has accommodations for a hundred boys, and cost \$14,000. The same fruit has not attended the lodging-house system among the girls, yet it has been a necessity and a success. The edifice No. 27 Saint Mark's place has been purchased for a Girl's lodging-house, at an expense of

\$22,500. The lodging-houses are supplied with reading-rooms, evening schools, music, and meals. The twenty-two industrial schools for poor girls are located in the different sections of the city where the class for which they were instituted are most numerous. These children and half-grown girls are sought out by visitors appointed by the managers. They are such as do not attend the ward schools, wild, ragged, apparently untamable, many of them growing up within a few blocks of Union square and other fashionable centers, living in cellars, garrets, or miserable shanties, without any of the advantages of school or church. They are when found filthy, indolent, quarrelsome, and profoundly ignorant of everything. They cannot close a rent in a garment, or attend to any household duty. In these schools they are taught, besides other species of handicraft, the use of the sewing-machine, which invariably secures them a good situation. Beside the paid teachers, many ladies of culture volunteer to assist in conducting these schools. During the last nine months, 7,000 different children have been under instruction in these industrial schools, 12,000 have found quarters in the lodging-houses, and 2,298 have been placed in homes, mainly in the West. The managers express deep gratitude that no railroad accident has ever occurred while conducting the more than eighteen thousand children to their new homes in various parts of the country. The children are not legally bound out, so but that if they prove truant, or their employers play the tyrant, the connection may be at any time dissolved. No one not engaged in this work can appreciate the magnitude of the evil this society is toiling to prevent, or the good it is yearly accomplishing. Notwithstanding the increase of population, the sentences to the city prisons, for such offences as children usually commit, are less than formerly. We find the total for vagrancy for 1869 only about half what it was in 1862—2,071 as against 4,299, and the females only numbered 785 against 3,172 in 1862; the total of this year, 646 less than in the year previous. In petit larceny, the total was only increased from 2,779 to 3,327 in seven years, though population has probably increased thirty-five per cent. in that time, and among females it has risen only from 880 in 1862, to 989 in 1869; while the total is 836 less than last year.

"The commitments of boys under 15 years are less than four years ago—1,872 in 1862 against 1,934 in 1865, and of

girls between 15 and 20, less than they were seven years ago—1,927 against 2,081; and of those under 15, less, being 325 in 1869 against 372 in 1862; the total commitments in 1869, as against 1862, are 46,476 to 41,449; in 1868 they were 47,313.


"The arrests for vagrancy are 2,449 against 3,961 in 1862; for picking pockets, 303 against 466; for petit larceny, 4,927 against 3,946, and against 5,260 in 1865, and 5,269 in 1867.

"The arrests of minors are less than they were in 1867, and but little greater than in 1863, 12,075 against 11,357; and those of female minors have fallen off, in seven years, 2,397 against 2,885 in 1862 to 3,132 in 1863—the total amount of all ages is 78,451 in 1869 against 84,072 in 1863, and 71,130 in 1862.

"The marked changes which everywhere occur in criminal records of our city, in the arrest and punishment of girls, is especially due, we believe, to the agency of 'Industrial Schools.'"

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SOCIETY FOR THE EMPLOYMENT AND RELIEF OF POOR  
WOMEN.

WENTY-SIX years ago, under the influence of the Rev. Orville Dewey, D.D., pastor of the church of the Messiah, this society was organized, and has the honor of being the first of its kind in New York. The object of the society is to prevent, in a measure, the pauperism which forms so painful a feature in the community; to supersede the daily almsgiving, which, instead of benefiting, only tends to deepen the degradation of this class by depriving them of a healthful self-dependence; to elevate them to the rank of independent laborers, and insure them a fair compensation for their toil. The annual payment of three dollars at first made a person a member of the society, but in 1847 the sum was changed to five dollars, and in 1865 to eight dollars. The management is committed to a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and twelve managers, all of whom are ladies. Each subscriber is allowed to send one applicant to the directors, but is held responsible


for any delinquencies in the person thus sent. Goods are purchased, manufactured into garments, and disposed of in the store kept by the society, and in such other ways as the managers shall direct. During 1869 work was given weekly to ninety-six women, and three thousand two hundred and sixty-one garments were manufactured. The society has experienced some difficulty in disposing of its goods, the sales of the year amounting to but little over \$3,000. The report of 1870 shows a small decrease on the previous year. Other societies in the city have grown up from the example furnished by this, and now control many times its amount of labor and capital. The society owns no building and operates with a small capital.

The managers have recently proposed to open a Mission House for missionary work among women and girls. They propose to keep the girls through the day, providing dinner, giving them instruction in useful studies during the morning hours, devoting the afternoon to needle-work in all branches. Every girl in turn to take part in the housework under the direction of a competent matron. They thus hope in time to establish a seamstress, a dressmaking, and a washing department, each of which shall be self-supporting. The new building to contain rooms to be used on Sabbath for Bible classes and Sunday school, and on week evenings for reading-room, lectures, music, and other entertainments and instruction suited to the wants of the pupils. The society is wholly controlled by the Unitarians.

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THE NEW YORK ASSOCIATION FOR IMPROVING THE CON-  
DITION OF THE POOR

(Office in Bible House.)

EW YORK, like every other great and populous city, is largely overrun with an army of beggars of both sexes, representing all ages and nationalities. Some of these are wealthy misers, retailing pretended sorrows to increase their gains, others meanly beg to avoid industry, a large number are improvident, and some hitherto industrious and

successful are so reduced, in times of general embarrassment, that begging becomes a necessity. Many of this latter class, finding themselves thus sadly in decline, become demoralized, and sink down to the slum of common pauperism. It is hardly a virtue to give indiscriminately to all that ask, because dissipation, idleness, and needless vagrancy, would be thus greatly increased. All have not the time to inquire into the character and condition of applicants, hence the necessity of a carefully organized association, to whom the worthy poor may successfully apply.

In 1843 this Association was formed, and in 1848 it was duly incorporated. The wonderful increase of foreign paupers had greatly swelled the army of straggling mendicants. To meet the demands, more than thirty almsgiving societies had been formed, many of which gave far too indiscriminately; all acted independently, thus furnishing an opportunity for artful mendicants to draw at the same time from several societies without detection. This society did not design to supersede any other, but simply to supply what in others was manifestly lacking. But so wise and comprehensive was its plan, that in a short time most of the others disbanded, leaving a far greater burden for it to carry than it had originally anticipated. The Association divided the city into twenty-two districts, which are again subdivided into sections, so small that the visitor residing in each could call at the house of every applicant. No supplies are given save through the visitor. The Association gives no money, and only such articles of food and clothing, in small quantities, as are least liable to abuse, giving always coarser supplies than industry will procure. The design of the Association is not the mere temporary relief, but the *elevation* of the moral and physical condition of the indigent; hence, temporary relief is resorted to when compatible with its general design. It requires every beneficiary to abstain from intoxicating drinks, to send young children to school, to apprentice children of suitable age, thus making the poor a party to their own improvement. During the twenty-seven years of its operations, the Association has relieved over one hundred and eighty thousand families, varying from five to fifteen thousand per annum, amounting to at least 765,000 individuals. Its disbursements down to October, 1870, amounted to \$1,203,767.53.

The labors of the Association for the elevation of the indigent and the suppression of unnecessary pauperism, have

been crowned with the most gratifying results. Its last annual report states that the average number of families relieved for the ten years ending with 1860 was 8,632, in a population averaging about 625,000 souls; while in the decade closing with 1870, with a population of over 900,000, but 6,131 families had been the annual average number relieved. These figures show that during the first decade named there was an absolute gain in the pecuniary independence of the masses previously relieved of *seventy-one per cent.*, and during the ten years closing with 1870 an additional improvement of *fifty-four per cent.*, or the substantial gain of one hundred and twenty-five per cent. during the last twenty years.

It will thus be seen that the amount of relief afforded by the sums of money expended give but an imperfect estimate of the service rendered by this Association to the cause of humanity. Always managed by wise, philanthropic minds, it has ever been first to discover the source of public evil, and prompt to suggest and apply the true remedy. Indeed, to this Association more than to any other are we indebted for the successful inauguration of more than a score of our most excellent charities. Besides furnishing the public with volumes of statistics, accumulated with great expense, in relation to our population, the causes and remedies of poverty, the unhealthy condition of our dwellings, and many other things which have led to great reforms, it has waged unceasing war with the public nuisances of the city, its lotteries, Sabbath desecration, gambling dens, intemperance, and many other evils. In 1846 a system for the gratuitous supply of medical aid, to the indigent sick in portions of the city not reached by existing Dispensaries, was organized. This led to the founding of the Demilt Dispensary in 1851, and the North-western Dispensary in 1852. In 1851 it projected the New York Juvenile Asylum.

A Public Washing and Bathing Establishment was established in 1852, at an expense of \$42,000, and the following year the Association procured an act to provide for the care and instruction of Idle Truant Children.

In 1854 the Children's Aid Society was formed by the demands of a public sentiment which this Association had largely created. The Workingmen's Home was erected in 1855, by the direction of the Association, at an expense of \$90,000. During the war it held steadily on its way, and

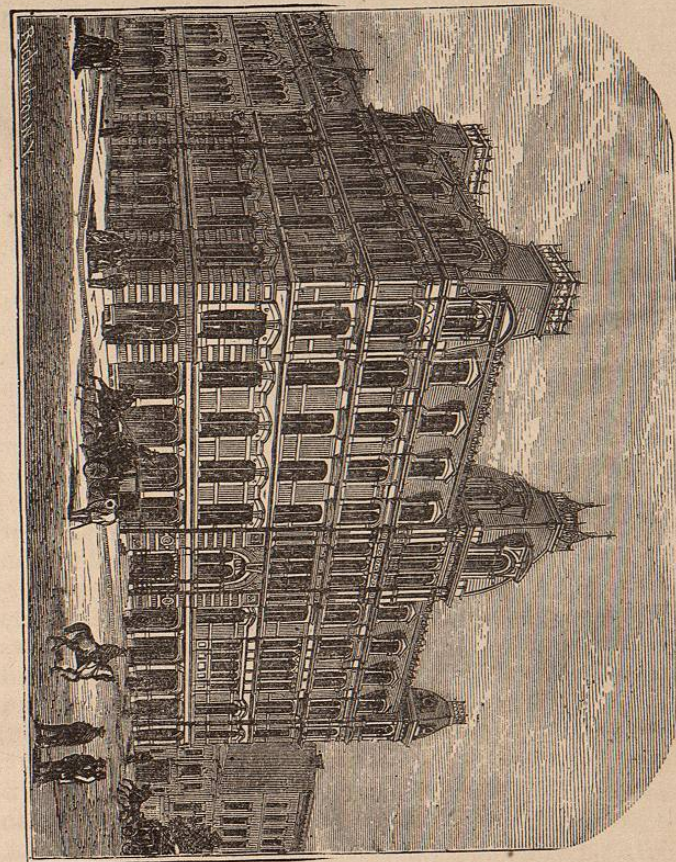
accomplished a vast amount of good in more ways than we have space to enumerate. We mention in honor of this society—last, but not least—in 1863 it organized the society for the Relief of the Ruptured and Crippled, which ranks to-day among the noblest charities of New York.

The Honorable Robert M. Hartley has been the indefatigable corresponding secretary and agent of the society since its formation, and to the patient thinking and incessant toil of this gentleman is the public indebted for much of the good accomplished by this and by several other societies. We cheerfully acknowledge our obligation to the secretary and his associate, Mr. Savage, for various items of information embodied in this work.

THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK.

(Corner of Fourth avenue and Twenty-third street.)

THE Young Men's Christian Associations are societies which have for their object the formation of Christian character and the development of Christian activity in young men. The first Association was organized in London on the sixth of June, 1844, and on the ninth of December, 1851, the first on this continent was formed at Montreal. The Boston Association established December 29, 1851, was the first in the United States, and the following years organizations sprang up in Washington, Buffalo, New York, the latter organized June 30, 1852. For several years little correspondence existed between the different Associations; but in 1854 the plan of holding an Annual Convention for the mutual interchange of thought, the gathering of statistical and other information, was introduced. This Convention, held in Buffalo, recommended to the Associations the formation of a voluntary confederation for mutual encouragement, having two agencies for carrying on its work, viz.: An Annual Convention and a Central Committee, the functions of these being only advisory or recom-



YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION BUILDING.