

# The Christian League of Philadelphia



A....

## RECORD OF APPLIED CHRISTIANITY

### ITS ORIGIN

MR. GEORGE GRIFFITHS  
Chairman Executive Committee

### ITS WORK

REV. CHARLES H. BOND  
General Secretary

### ITS MISSION IN CHINATOWN

REV. FREDERIC POOLE •  
Missionary in Charge



1898

# ...THE CORPORATION...

## President

REV. GEORGE D. BAKER, D. D., Presbyterian Church

## Vice=Presidents

REV. CYRUS D. FOSS, D. D., LL. D., Bishop Methodist Episcopal Church

RT. REV. O. W. WHITAKER, D. D., LL. D., Protestant Episcopal Church

REV. H. L. WAYLAND, D. D., Baptist Church

REV. W. M. BAUM, D. D., Lutheran Church

REV. C. H. RICHARDS, D. D., Congregational Church

## Treasurer

JOHN H. CONVERSE (of Baldwin Locomotive Works)

GEORGE GRIFFITHS

Chairman Executive Committee

CHARLES H. BOND

General Secretary

## Directors

Rev. Llewellyn N. Caley	Protestant Episcopal Church
Rev. H. Richard Harris, D. D.	" "
John Ashhurst, M. D.	" "
William Waterall	" "
Herbert Welsh	" "
Rev. W. R. Nicholson, D. D.	Bishop Reformed Episcopal Church
Joseph K. Wheeler	" "
Rev. Wm. Chas. Webb, D. D.	Methodist Episcopal Church
Rev. Wallace MacMullen, D. D.	" "
Rev. Joshua A. Lippincott, D. D.	" "
Arthur M. Burton	" "
Hon. Robert E. Pattison	" "
Rev. Thomas A. Hoyt, D. D.	Presbyterian Church
J. W. Walk, M. D.	" "
W. W. Longstreth	" "
George Griffiths	" "
Robert H. Hinckley	" "
John H. Converse	" "
H. W. Lambirth	" "
Rev. David Steele, D. D.	Reformed Presbyterian Church
William Finley	" "
Rev. C. S. Cleland	United Presbyterian Church
H. S. Boner	Lutheran Church
William H. Staake	" "
Rev. Kerr Boyce Tupper, D. D.	Baptist Church
Rev. Russell H. Conwell, D. D.	" "
J. P. Hall	" "
Rev. P. H. Milliken, Ph. D.	Reformed Church in America (Dutch)
Rt. Rev. Benj. T. Tanner, D. D.	African Methodist Episcopal Church
Rev. Edward S. Wolle	Moravian Church
Rev. Charles Nagel	" "
W. H. Lambert	Congregational Church
Rev. J. S. Myers	Disciples of Christ Church
Rev. James Crawford, D. D.	German Reformed Church
Joseph S. Elkinton	Friend Church



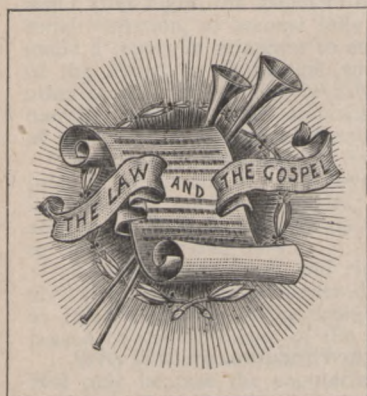
The Christian League is Inter-Denominational and Its Membership Includes Clergymen and Laymen in all the Evangelical Churches

---

# The Christian League

OF PHILADELPHIA

NORTHEAST CORNER CHESTNUT AND SEVENTH STREETS (ROOM 7)



REV. GEO. D. BAKER, D. D.  
President

JOHN H. CONVERSE  
Treasurer

GEORGE GRIFFITHS  
Chairman Executive Committee

REV. CHAS. H. BOND  
General Secretary

Organized March 19th, 1895  
Commenced Operations, May 15th, 1895  
Incorporated June 1st, 1896



## PURPOSES OF THE ORGANIZATION

To co-operate with other Societies in all practical efforts to improve the conditions of our fellow-beings, especially the neglected, ignorant, unprotected and debased. The Master bids us go to "every creature."

In conference and co-operation with the Mayor, Director of Public Safety, the District Attorney, the Superintendent of Police, the Boards of Health and Building Inspection, and other Municipal Departments, the League accomplishes much in the way of moral and sanitary improvements, and in protecting respectable citizens and their families from the disgusting conduct and conversation of those who make a business of immorality and sow broadcast the seeds of vice.





## WHAT LED TO THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHRISTIAN LEAGUE

BY MR. GEORGE GRIFFITHS

Chairman Executive Committee

In the spring of 1894, an address was delivered before the Presbyterian Social Union of our city by the Rev. Dr. Martin, then connected with the Princeton House work in the Slums.

After the address, the Union directed the Outlook Committee to ascertain what could be done to aid in this work. Day after day, and night after night, the members of the Outlook Committee sought, by personal visitation, to become fully informed. In November, the Committee made a report in reference to conditions existing, not only in the locality of the Princeton Settlement work, but also in connection with many other sections of our city, revealing a most appalling condition of affairs—morally, politically and sanitarily,—conditions known to comparatively few of our citizens—congested districts, wholly given over to iniquity.

I am not a pessimist. I most firmly believe that God reigns. I rejoice in the extent of our beloved city; in its many hives of industry; in its immense number of homes; in its churches and schools; in all that so largely abounds to make up that which inspires so many of its people to true and blessed lives.

I believe that truth and righteousness will triumph, but the speedy arrival of that time is hindered by the shortcomings of Christians—just as Israel's journey to the promised land was made long and tedious—by reason of the sinfulness of the people.

### **Why is there comparatively little counterfeit money in circulation?**

Not only because the counterfeiter runs the risk of being arrested and punished, but also because nearly all persons are on the alert, ever watching; so, if citizens were alive to the honor and true prosperity of their city, the same alert mind would characterize them in reference to watchfulness, concerning all that would advance the best interests of our city.

Slavery in our land was a terrible evil, the buying and selling of those made in God's image, with all the attendant sufferings and horrors; but consider conditions existing in all large cities, localities given up to poverty, infamy and crime, asking to be let alone, and their appeal granted. Statistics show that in sixteen cities, 800,000 men, women, and, saddest of all, children, are allowed to live on, year after year, amidst all that is heart-sickening and criminal; so that one of the worst localities in our city—yes, in the world—having a world-wide reputation, existed for nearly a century, and other dark sections for fifty and seventy-five years—buildings known by such names as Sparrow's Nest, Old Fort; Bandbox; Shooting Gallery, where men stood at each end and shot at one another; The Bloody Pit, where occurred frequent fights, murders, etc.; Lovers' Retreat, no peace within; The Crow; Green Onion; Old Bowling Alley, where Washington played skittles; The In-and-Out, where knives were stuck through coat tails, etc.; The Blazing Rag; Stag Hall, dance hall; Wabash House, dance hall; Buck Hall, dance hall; Murderers' Brick, noted for numerous murders; Murderers' Den, a refuge for murderers; The Dime, frequented by toughs of all characters, Dandy Hall, etc., etc.

And many of the houses are almost falling down, no repairs having been made for decades; cellars with water two to four feet deep; small yards filled with refuse two to six feet high; roofs leaking like a sieve; chimneys almost falling; windows without sash, or sash without glass in, winter as well as summer, and the interior beggars description, not fit for a dog-kennel, divided into many small rooms by one-fourth-inch boards, sometimes covered with newspapers; stairs and floors badly broken; more than ample ventilation through crevices in walls or framework, and every room crowded with human beings, living only to destroy, being intoxicated most of the time. Black and white, aged and young, paying from fifty cents to two dollars a week rent, generally promptly paid, for robberies of from \$5 to \$1800, or more, from frequenters of their rooms, enable them to pay on time. Houses purposely unnumbered, or numbers torn or rubbed off, so that strangers taken in and fleeced cannot tell positively the place they were in.

Many of these properties belong to estates, of which some of the largest and wealthiest corporations of our city are trustees, or to persons who would not like it to be known that they have been for years receiving large incomes from such shameful sources. In some instances ten per cent is paid agents for the collection of rent instead of the regular five per cent commission.

Thus it is to the interest of the agents to encourage this condition of things. As a result we see, not merely here and there an isolated house, but row after row of houses, square after square, all, or nearly all, used for the most infamous purposes, because property owners and agents receive larger income from such tenants.

I hold in my hand lists of badger and panel houses, speak-easies, policy shops, gambling dens, etc. Frequent murders, daily robberies, take place in these localities. They are crowded with men, women, boys and girls, not all of the most depraved classes, but who come, in many instances, from good homes in the city, and for one hundred miles around, to enter and find death to body and soul.

**We heard of a gentleman who said he did not quite approve of the work the Christian League is doing; he believed that if all parents would train their children as he was training his, there would be no young men going wrong. He was not aware that at the very time he was speaking, one of his sons was a regular frequenter of the worst dens in the city.**

It may be your son or your daughter will be tempted. You ought to be interested in wiping out such places.

The padding of election lists is extensively done in such localities.

Just before an election in 1894, there were 2500 names stricken from assessors' lists in a few days' examination of several divisions. A large number of persons had been registered as qualified voters in five different houses kept for the vilest purposes.

And oh! the crowds passing through such localities! thousands upon thousands, especially on Saturday nights, and until three or four o'clock Sunday mornings—tramp, tramp, tramp as an army.

Some persons have been aware of this condition of affairs, but have not known what to do nor where to go. It is surprising how helpless the individual is to cope with such tremendous evils. And so the thought grew upon the Committee that as "The Union League" during the Rebellion did so much to aid and strengthen the Government, so a Christian League might furnish a rallying centre, where all could make known their desires for a bettering of conditions and the enforcement of law; and this has proven correct, for complaints are received from all over our city, and help is rendered.

But some persons say it is best that there should be just such dark spots in a city, where all such evils as we have named should concentrate, and leave the rest of the city free.



Then why not have special localities given over to instruction in, and practice of, the fine arts of counterfeiting, forgery, burglary, and to wrongdoing of all sorts?

**No, no; rather make the doing of wrong more and more difficult, and instead of an increase there would be a large and rapid decrease in crime.**

Who is responsible for this appalling condition of affairs in our cities?

The authorities have their part to bear. "A public office" should indeed be a "public trust." Officials, from the highest to the lowest, should be a terror to evildoers, but this has not been as largely so as it should be, especially in the dark sections of our city. But just here let me say, there is a very important fact we should keep in mind, viz. #

*We have an inherited condition of affairs.* The present administration of our city government is not responsible for the starting and growth of the evils named. It did not originate with them; **but it is, and its successors will be responsible for stamping them out.**

This appalling extent of wrongdoing should never have been allowed. An officer having a beat of several squares is charged with the duty of knowing and reporting the condition of that district. If such a terrible condition of affairs as I have described is allowed to go on year after year, decade after decade, that shows that either the officer is unable to understand and do his duty, or else that he or some one higher in authority is subject to bribery. The latter has too often been the real explanation.

More attention should be given by individual citizens to a thorough knowledge of the character of every man presented for their suffrage. There would be less crime if every *magistrate* did his duty intelligently and honestly. More attention should be given by citizens, to see that the proper class of men occupy this important position.

**The bad citizenship of good citizens is largely responsible for the shocking conditions existing in our cities.** The recognition of individual responsibility and performance of duty has not been lived up to. You and I have neglected the true citizen's duty, to be on the alert, as to what is going on about us.

We have trodden the beaten paths, to Church, to business, to social engagements, to pleasures of one sort or another, turning neither to the right hand, nor to the left, *failing* to do as our Master did, "Who went about doing good," until lo! there have grown up in our sight, if we did but look, entire localities given over to the Evil One.

*Every community is what its citizens make it, or allow it to be made.*

*We want more of the individual effort, right down among the people or the things requiring correction.* **If there could be found six or eight earnest, devoted men, in each ward, willing to give themselves, night and day, to the noting of wrong things, and reporting to the Christian League, who would then confer with the authorities, insisting that laws shall be executed, undoubtedly there would be great improvement—**Eternal vigilance is demanded now, as ever.

"God give us men; A time like this demands,  
Strong minds, great hearts, true faith, and ready hands;

Men whom the lust of office does not kill;

Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;

Men who possess opinions and will;

Men who have honor; Men who will not lie;

Men who can stand before a demagogue

And scorn his treacherous flatteries without winking,

Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog,

In public duty and in private thinking."

On March 19, 1895, The Christian League was organized, with the following objects in view:

1. To organize and carry forward with vigor and enlarged power, in the City of Philadelphia, the great work committed in common to all Christians, co-operating therein with other Societies wherever practicable.

2. To confer and act in concert with the Civil Authorities in all matters which may promote the moral and physical welfare of the people, especially in the suppression of vice and immorality, in public and in private.

3. To provide increased facilities, and to secure Christian Workers for carrying on the work of the League in those parts of the City where the need is the greatest and laborers are few.

4. To provide proper homes, especially in the country, for children surrounded in the city by the most depraving influences.

5. To devise ways and means to assist in the preservation and observance of the Sabbath, or The Lord's Day; to discourage the liquor traffic; to prevent the publication and sale of impure literature, and the exhibition of demoralizing pictures; and generally to promote such measures as will make and keep Philadelphia a Christian City in name and in fact.

You will note the League was organized, not only to act with the authorities in the suppression of vice and crime, and to confer with other organizations in promoting various good works, but also to aid in carrying the Gospel to those in need of it, and God has wonderfully blessed this department of work among the Chinese.

From the beginning of our organization, we have had every courtesy shown us by the Mayor and several departments of our City government, and in our efforts to aid in the enforcement of law, we have been, as a rule, successful in accomplishing excellent results. Sometimes, not all has been done that we have asked for, nor, as speedily as desired, but yet progress has been made, as you will learn from our General Secretary's Report.

**Oh! Christian citizens of Philadelphia, do give attention to what is going on about you. Note the thousands,** mostly young lives, being led to death, body and soul. Demand that all departments of our city government shall do their duty, and also enlist, so far as you can, as bearers of the glad tidings to every locality, and as Joab said to the people of Israel, "Be of good courage, and show yourselves men," for the good of our City, until we reach that glorious City, whose Builder and Maker is God, and hear the welcome, "Well done, the world is better for your having lived in it."



## THE WORK OF THE CHRISTIAN LEAGUE

REV. CHARLES H. BOND

General Secretary

When the Presbyterian Social Union of Philadelphia, in 1894, raised the vital question: "As Christians and good citizens, what ought we to do to aid in the reformation of the morally dark sections of our city?"—and instructed the Outlook Committee to investigate the University Settlement work in the Slum districts—it was building better than it knew.



Under the leadership of the Chairman, Mr. George Griffiths, that Committee made a thorough inspection of conditions which had existed from time immemorial, and had been allowed to fester and grow, while the followers of the only Saviour habitually "passed by on the other side." **Some of the most earnest Christians,—in fact, the great majority—have been compelled to admit that they have entirely overlooked the sin-cursed regions at home, while making every effort and sacrifice to succor benighted ones "afar off."** They did not realize. They did not *think*. Even if their thoughts occasionally turned toward these unwholesome and uninviting sections of the city, the tempter whispered into their ears, and told them it was useless to combat "necessary evils," and try to save the totally depraved—to "let them alone," where they were known and could be kept in check.

Did our Master ever talk to His disciples in that way, even when referring to the very worst? We know better, and we had failed to "seek and save," because we had supposed the denizens and visitors here were all a part of the "submerged tenth," and beyond our reach. Chairman Griffiths and his committee, in their report presented to the "Social Union," November 26, 1894, clearly proved, from their own observation and experiences, that no power could avail except that of "applied Christianity."

"Only freedom comes by grace of God." They discovered the direst necessity for the united efforts of the Church of Christ. They found evil encouraged and protected for selfish, political purposes. They found many who were fattening on the ruin of others. They saw what Christian people had failed to see—because they did not look—that thousands of youth and little children were in urgent need of the protective and preventive influences, and the active, persistent, continuous efforts of the Christian community.

The Outlook Committee strongly recommended the organization of a Christian League, to be incorporated and composed of representatives of all the evangelical churches, having for its objects the enforcement of existing laws, the improvement of neighborhoods, as to moral and sanitary conditions, co-operation with other Societies and with the civil authorities, and, above all, the spread of the glorious Gospel and the recognition of Christ as the only Deliverer, whose authority must be recognized among the "powers that be," and without whom no lasting good can be accomplished.

The report was unanimously adopted, and addresses were made by guests of the Union: Bishop Whitaker of the Protestant Episcopal Church, Bishop Foss of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Rev. Dr. Wayland of the *Baptist Examiner*, Rev. Dr. Duhring of the P. E. City Mission, Dean Bartlett of the Divinity School, and others, spoke in favor of the recommendation.

Accordingly, the Christian League of Philadelphia was organized, March 19, 1895, at Holy Trinity Parish House, and the Constitution and By-Laws were adopted. Rev. George D. Baker, D. D., pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, was elected President. The Vice-Presidents are Rev. Cyrus D. Foss, D. D., Bishop M. E. Church; Rt. Rev. O. W. Whitaker, D. D., Bishop P. E. Church; Rev. H. L. Wayland, D. D. (Baptist); Rev. W. M. Baum, D. D., pastor of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, and Rev. C. H. Richards, D. D., of Central Congregational Church. The Board of Directors, composed of clergy and laymen, represent fifteen denominations.

Mr. George Griffiths, who is a prominent manufacturer, and a devoted Christian worker, was appointed to the very important position of Chairman of the Executive Committee. All who have watched with interest the remarkable development of the Christian League, in its prac-

tical work and powerful influence, will attribute its success to the untiring energy of Mr. Griffiths, who gives much of his time to the cause.

Mr. John H. Converse, of the Baldwin Locomotive Works, notwithstanding his many business engagements and responsibilities, kindly and faithfully serves the Christian League as Director, Treasurer and Chairman of the Finance Committee.

The standing committees are the Executive, the Membership, the Finance, the Committee on Leagues in other cities, and the district and local committees. Clergymen and members identified with any Evangelical church or religious society are eligible to membership. Rev. Charles H. Bond was appointed General Secretary in May, 1895, and the League at once entered upon its active work.

To that section of the city known for nearly a century as the "Coast," and given over to vice, immorality, murder and robbery—mentioned in *"Watson's Annals"* as a notorious resort of the lowest classes—the League at once directed its attention. This neighborhood swarmed with dissolute women, boldly soliciting all passersby, men and boys, without let or hindrance. **It was heartrending to see young men, from sixteen to twenty years of age, thronging through these smaller streets and alleys, prompted at first by curiosity, but finally many of them were lured to their ruin.** This region was called the "Coast," because, in former years, it was a resort for sailors; but more recently, according to the testimony of one proprietress, they have made their living by ruining and robbing *the boys*.

Accompanied by the Superintendent of Police and several special officers, the active workers of the League have gone through these districts when the streets and sidewalks were crowded, and immorality and profanity reigned supreme—when brawling, shameless creatures plied their unholy business, and held possession, to the exclusion of all purity and decency. Yet, in the midst of these sights and sounds, many little children were to be found, becoming familiar with the lowest forms of depravity.

Surely, every city in the United States can learn a practical lesson from our record. This entire district, which was notorious the world over, has been thoroughly reclaimed and redeemed. The work was done quietly, without the flare of trumpets, by the Chairman of the Executive Committee, accompanied and assisted by a few others, and with the ready co-operation of the civil authorities and the strong backing of the Christian community.

The Christian League moved forward into another district, which is but a few steps from Independence Hall, and close to the social and business centres of the city. Here were found conditions which were appalling, for whites and blacks had settled the question of equality in vice by mingling indiscriminately and holding their own, in defiance of law and Gospel. In some respects this was a more difficult and dangerous field of operation, and even at the present writing the efforts of the League are being renewed with increased vigor. Many of the houses here are in such a state that it is impossible to induce respectable tenants to occupy them, and this suggests another important feature of the work, which will be referred to again. In dealing with all these conditions, the Christian League made a new departure, and, as a prominent clergyman remarked, **"struck the keynote of success by calling the attention of owners of properties to their responsibility."** In Pennsylvania, the Act of March 31, 1860, provides that any person who knowingly lets or demises a house for immoral purposes shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and, on conviction, shall be sentenced to pay a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars, and to undergo an imprisonment not exceeding two years. The League promptly notified a number of owners and agents, with good results, for within a few months, in the district known as the "Coast," wonderful changes had been made. Quiet and order took the



place of lawlessness, and consternation followed defiance. "Old things had passed away," and all was new. For many months it has not been necessary to inspect this neighborhood, so complete has been the transformation. Recently, an officer of the League, passing through one of these streets, hearing a voice, paused to listen, and he rejoiced when he saw a father leading his family in evening devotions. That same house had long been the abode of many who were "without God and without hope."

The purification of this district was a matter of astonishment and congratulation. **Such grand results, in the line of reform, had never been accomplished, and were considered impossible.** Of course, there were many who criticised and offered objections. The saloon keepers were not pleased; the lawyers who received large fees for helping poor creatures to evade the law were not satisfied; the men who demanded large commissions for "straw bail" were not delighted, and the lazy "pimps" who were supported by the merchandise of body and soul were indignant and disgusted. Probably Satan himself was disturbed.

Let it be fully understood that the Christian League neither prosecutes nor persecutes. With the law in one hand and the Gospel in the other, it labors for the betterment of places and people, and extends the hand of rescue to those "in the depths" who sincerely yearn for a better life. **The "Kind Word" circular is freely distributed, offering temporary and permanent homes** to all who, like the prodigal, come to themselves, and prefer the Father's house to the stranger's husks. The same kindly feeling is exercised toward any unfortunates who are in distress. In the very midst of the most revolting scenes the officers of the League have made their way to the bedsides of the sick, summoning medical aid, and doing all in their power to alleviate suffering. Many parents, unable to live in better neighborhoods, have complained of the examples set before their little children, and the League has been prompt to protect them.

And now arises a question which friends and foes have alike propounded: **What becomes of these people when you have driven them from their haunts?** Well, doubtless they "still live," as we have no right to deprive them of existence. Many scatter themselves in other localities and many continue an evil course. One thing is certain, however: the original conditions cannot be reproduced. A congested accumulation of seventy-five years may be broken up in that many days, but, with careful inspection, it will never become as bad as before. In this case scattering weakens. Please give attention to the following reply given by an Episcopal missionary, when this question was put to him. He says: **"Scattering this evil is not like scattering poison,—to spread it, but like scattering fire,—to stamp it out."** This is true. Then we must consider the *general effect* of such work as the Christian League is doing. In all parts of the city lawbreakers are more cautious, less prosperous,—for their victims are also alarmed,—in constant dread,—for the Christian League presses all complaints from reputable citizens, rich or poor. Thus the wagging head of the evildoer is brought low,—hidden in shame and fear, and the way of the transgressor is made more difficult.

Still, referring to the question as to what becomes of the inmates of houses of immorality, the League has the more recent records of quite a number of women, men and children who, by force of circumstances, have either willingly or unwillingly been compelled to alter their ways. One woman, whose young son lived with her, has bought a little home in the country, glad to have her boy removed from former scenes. Another woman, whose husband was a drunkard, became proprietress of a house of ill-fame, thereby supporting her family. She was arrested, with many others, and imprisoned. In a few days her daughter, a respectable married woman, requested the League to intercede for her release, promising



to take her mother to her own home and to keep her away from the old life. A proprietor, in failing health, gave up the "business" and moved to a farm in New Jersey. These are but a few cases to prove that practical and permanent results are attained. At the request of civil authorities, the League has visited, warned and advised those who were formerly engaged in unlawful pursuits, and who are now being encouraged to maintain themselves legitimately and respectably, while, at the same time, they are mercifully spared from present punishment for past misdoings.

Of course, we can understand why many will criticise all measures and methods of reform, but we must remember that the *evil spirits* in the country of the Gadarenes prayed to be let alone, and not to be "tormented before the time."

**The Christian League does not confine its efforts to the districts known as the "Slums," but responds to complaints from all parts of the city.** A recent communication forwarded to the Director of Public Safety, covered seven pages and contained thirty grievances, which represented Police Districts, from the Second to the Twenty-fifth. Neither is it the special work of the Society to close houses of bad repute, but to use its influence for the enforcement of all the laws of the Commonwealth, and for the moral and sanitary improvement of all sections. **It co-operates with the Sabbath Association in demanding the proper observance of the Lord's Day, and with the Law and Order Society in opposing violations of the license laws.** The display and sale of impure literature and indecent pictures, and the exhibition of objectionable theatrical and variety performances, are vigorously discouraged. Pool selling has been abated, largely through the efforts of the Christian League, and urgent appeals to the Governor and Legislature have availed in the procuring of wholesome laws.

Up to the present time the League has had the full co-operation of the civil authorities, which is gratefully acknowledged and appreciated. **Judge Beitler (formerly Director of Public Safety), writes as follows:** "Your work was so eminently practical, and conducted in such a satisfactory manner that the doors of the Department \* \* \* were always open to you." Continuing, he speaks of the good judgment, patient zeal and indefatigable work of the officers of the League, which, he says, "demanded my admiration, and made me willing and anxious at all times to do for your Society whatever could be done by the Department of Public Safety. \* \* \* *I sincerely hope your League will be strengthened, so that the good work done may be continued.*"

From time to time, conferences have been held with the Mayor and heads of departments, wherein committees from the League, composed of prominent professional and business men, have brought to the attention of the authorities certain matters of serious importance in the interests of good government and better police supervision.

Accompanied by inspectors from the Board of Health, a committee of League Workers has investigated complaints of unsanitary conditions, **and hundreds of nuisances have been abated.** While engaged in this inspection it was discovered, by comparing the list of registered voters with the information gathered, that the rolls had been "padded," and that little frame houses occupied by three or four men furnished from fifteen to thirty voters on election days. A dog and a cat had been registered as entitled to the sacred right of franchise.

On these same trips the committee found many wooden buildings so dilapidated and dangerous as to be unfit for human habitation. Complaints were promptly made to the Bureau of Building Inspection, and the houses were condemned. Many have been torn down, while other cases are pending in the Law Department.

Reference has been made to the untenable condition of such prop-



erties as an obstacle to the Christian League's work of improvement in some localities. To overcome this difficulty **a determined effort is being made to destroy all traces of these miserable abodes and erect a better class of dwellings**, which will attract more desirable tenants, who find employment in the business centres within a few blocks.

To this end the League urges capitalists and others seeking investments to consider the practical philanthropy, combined with security and a reasonable income of four or five per cent, which would follow a movement of this kind. **The Slums of Philadelphia, as they were, have passed away, and if the Christian League is sustained and encouraged, will never be allowed to return.** There are no necessary evils. The evolution of neighborhoods, when law and order are enforced, brings in better classes, who are more reliable as citizens and tenants.

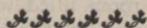
Through the efforts of the League and the response of the "powers that be," **a large number of additional electric lights have been recently placed in small streets and public squares, and neglected, dangerous streets and alleys have been repaved, thus being relieved of pools of stagnant water.**

In November, 1896, a Chinese Mission School was established in Chinatown by the Christian League, and a most excellent work is being accomplished.

In conclusion we would suggest the formation of Christian Leagues—interdenominational—in other cities. Baltimore is now considering this question, and we have inquiries from the far West, from California, from the South, from our own and several neighboring States and the Dominion of Canada. There should be a National League of Christians, moving mightily against lawlessness and corruption in high and low places, and contending earnestly for good citizenship and good government. **Why are we here? If the "powers that be" are ordained of God, let us help Him to make them what they should be.**

"He is not a freeman that can do what he will, but he that will do what he should."

There is no danger in mixing good religion and good politics. Daniel Webster says: "Whatever makes a man a Christian makes him a good citizen."



## THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL IN "CHINATOWN."

BY FREDERIC POOLE

Missionary in Charge

The Chinese Mission established by The Christian League in our local "Chinatown"—Race, between Ninth and Tenth streets—is now too well known to require words of introduction. It has become one of the recognized evangelistic and educational agencies of Philadelphia. Circumstances and environments create needs, and it is now generally conceded that there is no benevolent or Christian institution in this city more imperatively needed than is this Mission to the Chinese.

To our many staunch friends who take a deep interest in this work, and to others who, having heard a little, desire to know more, this brief account of what has been, and is being, accomplished is respectfully submitted.

While the work of the Mission is many sided, and of an intensely practical nature, yet the chief object of all our labors is kept constantly in view by all our helpers, and ever held up as pre-eminent before those whom they are seeking to uplift, namely, their conversion to Christ and development in service. All other phases of the work are made strictly subservient to this glorious end.

### THE SCHOOL

To impress the Chinese with the advantages of Western civilization, and to assist them to a proper appreciation of our laws, as well as to prepare their minds for the reception of Christian truth, an adequate knowledge of the English language is necessary; so the first attraction of the Mission to the young and ambitious foreigner is the opportunity to freely obtain such knowledge. The result is that on evenings devoted to this work our school room may be found crowded to its utmost capacity with bright, intelligent young men, who patiently apply themselves to the instruction given by an earnest and devoted staff of Christian teachers. We regret, however, that this work is greatly hampered by an insufficient corps of assistants. For example: a gentleman interested in the school called one evening, and observed how each teacher endeavored to divide his attention between from two to four Chinamen gathered about him, each at a different stage of advancement. As he was about to leave, a young Chinaman, sitting by a table with a companion, having a book, but no one to explain its strange characters, lifted his intelligent face with a hungry expression and said, "Please teach us." China has come to us,—ready, willing and anxious to learn. Any intelligent man can teach, as we use the parallel texts. Every pupil should have his own teacher. *Who will volunteer?* Let him who would rejoice to teach his Lord, were He in such need, consider His words, "Inasmuch as ye do it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye do it unto me." The school is the stepping-stone to

### THE Y. M. C. A.

a growing organization, which now rejoices in a membership of nearly two hundred, its religious meetings being held every Sunday evening on the second floor of the building. There is no more interesting or encouraging sight than to see this room filled with Chinamen who, with deep interest depicted in every countenance, and with earnest reverence, listen to the preaching of the Gospel by the more advanced of their number, elected by them to fill these honorable positions. The preaching is in their native tongue, and is the result of a faithful study of the Scriptures. To hear these bright-faced boys voluntarily engage in prayer, and heartily join in the singing of Christian hymns, would surely convince the most skeptical as to the value of this missionary enterprise.

Through the kindness of the Baldwin Locomotive Works, a bell has recently been placed in position, which announces the hour of service throughout the neighborhood.

It is with inexpressible joy that we are able to report that during the comparatively short history of the Mission—a year and a half—eleven young Chinamen have been led to intelligently accept the doctrine of Christ, and on public confession of their faith have been baptized and received into fellowship with the various Evangelical Churches of the city. When we consider that one of the first missionaries to the Chinese labored *ten years* before gaining his first convert, we thank God and take courage. Nor is this all. From far away places in this and sister States, Chinamen wend their way periodically to Philadelphia, and many from idle curiosity have wandered into the Mission and listened to the story of the Cross, and we are praying that in the quiet of their country laundries the



seed thus sown may spring up into Eternal Life. In this way we are helping to bless and elevate not alone the two or three thousand Chinese residing in this city, but also hundreds who make this, their "Mecca," a periodical visit.

This organization is also supplying workers whose privilege it will be, by precept and practice, to still further develop Christian character among their countrymen in Philadelphia. Mr. Lee Hong, who from the inauguration of the Association has been its popular and well-beloved President, is now preparing to equip and qualify himself for the ministry, that he may be yet more efficient in his labor of love.

#### **THE C. E. SOCIETY**

which is closely allied to the Y. M. C. A., holds its meetings each Monday evening, and is proving to be a most important factor in the Christian development of the younger converts. Led by one of their number, who expounds a passage of Scripture selected on the week previous, the members of the Society, one after another, will stand up and give utterance to thoughts upon the text as it appears to them, and in this manner gain confidence in their ability to testify, and are strengthened for still greater activity. Thus they mend their nets for the service of Him who is graciously making them "fishers of men."

#### **A FAR-REACHING WORK**

The influence of such a work is not limited to this city, or, indeed, to this country, but is far-reaching. Most of these Chinamen anticipate returning to their native land, if only for a brief visit. They come to us as heathen; they return as Christians, to bear witness to the power of a living Gospel with that facility which the Foreign Missionary, struggling continuously with the difficulties of the language, can never acquire. We realize, therefore, that in this undertaking we are not only bringing these people out of heathen darkness into the light of the Truth, but we are training them to supplement the efforts of the Foreign Missionary in their own land.

A striking example of this truth was afforded recently when one of our brightest and most promising boys, having lost his life at the hand of an intoxicated American, was given Christian burial from the Mission. So impressed was his heathen brother by the sympathy, kindness and assistance rendered that he is seriously considering a change of faith. An aged relative, likewise a Confucionist, sent word home at once that his son should be sent to the Baptist Missionary School in Canton for the remainder of his education. Thus the boundary-line between home and foreign missions is oftentimes hardly discernible.

About fifteen months ago, through the kindness of Mr. John H. Converse, and in response to their own applications, endorsed by the Christian League, several Chinese boys were admitted into the Baldwin Locomotive Works to learn the trade, which will enable them to assist in operating the railroads now being constructed in China. The Chinese Minister at Washington has officially expressed his approval. He thanks the League for the interest taken in his countrymen, and thinks there is good prospect for them at home when they have completed their apprenticeship.

#### **A SOURCE OF BENEFICENCE**

Through the Dispensary connected with the Mission we are enabled to do a Christlike work in healing the sick,—and not a few have had their thoughts turned to the Great Physician, as our doctor, A. George Baker, M. D., skillfully attended to their physical ailments, and at the same time kindly and judiciously spoke to them of a still greater need.

In addition, while waiting for treatment, the attention of patients is attracted by Scriptural scrolls and cards, inscribed in familiar characters, mingled with native decorations adorning the walls of the several rooms. Passages from the Bible are also found on pill-boxes and bottles which they carry to their homes with the necessary prescription; and it is impossible to estimate the influence of these silent Gospel messages.

We are indebted for that indispensable appendage to a dispensary—a set of surgical instruments—to the teachers and scholars of the Chinese Sunday School, which meets at Broad and Columbia avenue, and to our highly-esteemed friend, Mr. Albert Oetinger, for his continued goodness and generosity in supplying the necessary drugs for the Dispensary.

### **“CHINATOWN”**

has felt the influence of this Christian Mission. Apart from any other source of gratification and encouragement, the vastly improved moral and sanitary condition of the neighborhood attests unmistakably to the fact that our labors have not been in vain.

For years the word “Chinatown” had been synonymous with every form of evil, until the unsavory reputation which it had thus acquired was, in the estimation of the average person, unacquainted with the facts in the case, attributed to the depravity of the Chinese located there. By our efforts in this colony we have been enabled to throw considerable light on the true conditions which there prevail, and while we do not desire in the least to condone the evils peculiar to the Chinaman, yet in all honesty we are compelled to state that these unfortunate conditions have been intensified tenfold by the congregation and settlement there of lewd and law-defying characters other than Mongolians.

True reformatory work is impartial. We were compelled to meet and deal with the conditions as they existed. The motto of The Christian League, “The Law and the Gospel,” has been repeatedly verified in its dual application in this colony in relation both to Chinese and to others who obstinately refused to listen to friendly admonition, and persistently indulged in acts which were in open violation of the law. Supported by the hearty co-operation of the civil authorities, with whom we ever seek to work in harmony, we have succeeded in ridding this community of some of its worst and most degraded characters; and while there still remains much to be done along this line, we appreciate the testimony of those who have long known this neighborhood, that “Chinatown to-day is not what it was two years ago.”

There may be some who are not aware that a heathen temple is maintained opposite to the Mission, where idolatry, pure and simple, is practiced daily, just as it is in Central China. A significant event, illustrating the influence of the Mission, occurred recently when at the former a new deity was installed with imposing ceremonies, and at the same hour the school had a larger attendance than ever before.

The purpose of the Mission is twofold. Just as through the law the evildoer is restrained, so through this “Hall of Happiness and Glad Tidings” a positive influence is exerted over the lives and destinies of the Christian Chinamen of the city by affording them a place for daily social resort, free from the subtle dangers that surround them in this quarter. It is their “city of refuge.”

### **PROTECTION FOR THE OPPRESSED**

The practical nature of our operations is never more forcibly illustrated than when the Missionary responds to a pitiful appeal from a Chinaman who complains that he is suffering from malicious persecution. Many youths who have been better instructed, but who, knowing



of the Chinaman's ignorance of the English language, and of his long-suffering disposition, take a despicable advantage of his helplessness and make life a burden to him. We recognize that such conduct is not only uncharitable, inhuman and un-American, but that it also tends to increase the Chinaman's conservatism,—to embitter his spirit, and thus render more difficult every effort put forth for his elevation. Moreover, it raises a doubt in his mind as to the truth of the sentiment expressed in the Golden Rule.

The means which we have successfully applied to restrain and punish, when necessary, those who were found guilty of these unworthy acts, have born fruit. This humane interference has proven a means to an end. The laundrymen thus protected have had their prejudices scattered, and many have been induced to come to the Christian Mission to find knowledge. This naturally engenders a spirit of independence, and enables them to successfully grapple with the difficulties daily confronting them in their life and peculiar vocation. While the privilege of citizenship in this great, free land is denied the Chinaman, yet he possesses certain rights which cannot be ignored. Though an alien, he is entitled, because of an international agreement, to full and adequate protection according to the laws of the land.

The most striking illustration of the need of information on this subject was afforded us in connection with a case with which we had to deal in a neighboring city, where a Chinaman had been most brutally assaulted by a gang of hoodlums. Our appeal to the Police Department and the Chief Executive of the city was met with cold indifference. Realizing that if this condition of affairs was allowed to continue no Chinaman in the city would be safe from outrage, we communicated the facts of the case to His Excellency the Chinese Minister at Washington, and through the regular administrative channels the delinquent officials referred to were speedily made to realize their blunder, with the result that the Chinese of that city are now very rarely molested. The knowledge of this successful interposition, which involved international interests and diplomatic representations, had the desired effect of winning the confidence of our protégés, and impressing them with the ability of their Christian friends to protect them. In all efforts put forth in this direction, we ask no special privilege for these people, but desire only that the law of God, upon which is based our judicial system, be applied alike to them as to others. "Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger as for one of your own country."

### **THE FACE BEHIND THE CURTAIN**

This brief description of Chinatown life would be incomplete should we fail to speak of the sad and pathetic condition of the half-dozen Chinese women resident there. Wives of prosperous Chinese merchants, they are kept secluded in upper rooms, and their vision of the outside world is limited to what they may see from their closely-curtained apartments. The dull monotony of their lives is enlivened only by the companionship of little Chinese girls brought from home to wait upon them.

Chinese etiquette prohibits these ladies from appearing on the street and mingling with others. In addition, the physical disability of one or two of them would render such an attempt impossible; for they are victims to the fashion which in China requires the mother to bind her infant daughter's feet so tightly that they are crushed out of shape, and further growth prevented, with the result that at adult age she is able to wear shoes which measure no more than three inches in length.

One or two of them live near to the Mission, and their windows are invariably thrown open while our services are in progress so that they may listen to the singing. This is practically all they hear of the "Jesus Doctrine," except when some of our Christian ladies are permitted to enter their rooms, and as well as they are able, speak to them of Him who died and lives for them.

We are glad to be able to say, however, that these women and children, aside from particulars just mentioned, are well treated.

But one case of cruelty and abuse has come to our notice. One of these little girls, "Choy," was subject to ill treatment at the hands of her master and mistress. We speedily came to her rescue, and by legal means had her released from her bondage, and she is now enjoying the comforts of a Christian home and the blessing of an American school education.

It is impossible, in this limited sketch, to refer to the numerous interesting features and encouraging incidents of this great work. The whole subject has been merely touched upon, but we most earnestly hope that what has been said will appeal to the reader in such manner as to prompt prayerful sympathy and practical aid.


While our Mission is the acknowledged headquarters of all Chinese who are interested in matters pertaining to education and Christian teaching, yet we seek to work in hearty sympathy and co-operation with all the Chinese Sunday Schools established in the city for bettering the condition of this long-neglected people; and it is our constant endeavor to remind the many congregations in Philadelphia of their responsibility, and to urge them to establish local classes in connection with their own schools.

It is purely Missionary work, and should therefore appeal to all who love Him who bade us carry the Gospel to the heathen. It is a work of education and enlightenment, as well as of benevolence and protection, and as such must commend itself to all who have at heart the true interests of humanity, and are jealous for the fair name of the "City of Brotherly Love."



# The Christian League

IS IN URGENT NEED OF FUNDS FOR ITS GENERAL  
AND CHINESE WORK



**I**F ONE HUNDRED FRIENDS, who approve the "Law and Gospel" work of The Christian League—who are anxious to reclaim "OUR CITY FOR CHRIST,"—who, without neglecting Foreign Missions, believe in educating, civilizing and saving the heathen in our midst,—natives and aliens,—will contribute ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS EACH, or pledge themselves to raise that amount, the League will be freed from debt, and enabled to accomplish "greater things than these." Or, if TWO HUNDRED FRIENDS will become LIFE MEMBERS at FIFTY DOLLARS each, this end will be accomplished. We ought to have FIVE THOUSAND ANNUAL MEMBERS at ONE DOLLAR each, per year.

## WILL YOU BE ONE?

Remember, this kind of work Prevents Poverty, Pauperism and Crime



**CONTRIBUTIONS** of any amount, large or small, sent to the Treasurer, MR. JOHN H. CONVERSE, 500 North Broad Street (Baldwin Locomotive Works), will be gratefully received and duly acknowledged.

If there is anything wrong in your neighborhood, requiring the attention of the authorities—either police or health—send word to the office of The Christian League.

## FORM OF BEQUEST



*I give and bequeath to The Christian League  
of Philadelphia,*

---

*and the receipt of the Treasurer shall be sufficient  
discharge to my executors for the same.*