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YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION OF TIENTSIN.

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72

Foreign Department of the
International Committee of the Y.M.C.A.,
New York City,

Gentlemen:-

Herewith I beg to submit my Annual Administration Report for the year 1923 together with a statement of our Boys' Division policy. I regret very much that I failed to submit such a report for 1922. That was an extremely trying year for my family with much illness and the first two months of 1923 were largely given over to care of my wife, so that much that I wanted and planned to do went by the board.

I am glad to say that the five of us are very well indeed and this year starts out auspiciously.

Sincerely yours,

Arthur G. Robinson

P.S. I enclose also a statement sent out to my constituency which summarizes very well the work of the year.

89 5/4/24
ANNUAL ADMINISTRATION REPORT OF A.G. ROBINSON for 1923.

Tientsin, China. (March 21, 1924.)

1. The Boys' Work of the Tientsin Association was my specific responsibility but it has been interesting to note the ramifications of the work for boys into practically all the departments of the Association. Increasing stress in all our Associations in China is being laid upon Boys' Work. Among the most encouraging results of last year's work was the growing number of boys engaged in definite pieces of social service. Over two hundred different boys were enlisted in health and thrift campaigns, teaching poor boys' schools, Christmas entertainments, etc. Many of these boys served in several campaigns, with the result that it is increasingly easy to find boys ready to undertake some new piece of unselfish service.

Another encouraging development has been in the endorsement given to a plan of work among the grammar school boys the local board of education and the principals in whose schools we propose to start this Chinese C.C.T.P. Our approach was carefully made, depending greatly on the goodwill engendered among the school authorities by previous efforts, chiefly in physical work and lectures, for the grammar school lads.

A deepening conviction on the part of two or three of our voluntary leaders that Boys' Work is fundamental to the best growth of the Church gives us courage and the resolution to forward our interchurch Boys' Work as rapidly as possible. Our own Boys' Division secretaries are growing in capacity to bear responsibility and there has been among them the past year the best spirit of cooperation that we've had in my experience here. Through their work some ten boys have come into the church and large numbers have been enlisted in service.

A successful experiment was conducted with our Boys' camp last summer. Having done some definite piece of social service was made a requisite for attendance and no effort was made through advertising or special promotion to reach more boys whose parents could afford to send them. Furthermore the boys who could qualify on this service basis were told that they would be expected to serve the community in which the camp was located and that there would also be training for continued service. Further warning was given that there would be work for all and rather common food. But all these possible deterrents only added to the interest of the twenty-one boys who went and last summer's camp was by far the best we've had.

2. As to problems, the old one of getting volunteer leaders is even more acute. Not that we have none, but our failure to enlist a number of men to have direct leadership of boys' groups. The volunteers now working with us are mostly giving service on committees or in special campaigns. This is valuable help, meeting a very real need, but if our work is to grow, we must have a number of men of strong Christian life actively leading groups of boys both in the Churches and in the Association.

One of the difficulties here is involved in another problem - that of getting larger calibred men for our Boys' Work secretaryship. To put it coldly and on a commercial basis, for the sake of contrast alone, we need \$100 instead of \$50 a month men, and these, too, should be local men coming into our work at a real sacrifice. With one or two such men there

would be far less difficulty, I believe, in securing the right kind of volunteer leaders.

The deepening of the spiritual lives of us all and our intellectual growth are matters that need, and shall have, more attention from me. One doesn't need to dwell on the problem involved, and the solution must begin "at home"; that is, with oneself. More and more I realize the absolute necessity of my keeping close to the men with whom I am working and giving them what I can only get from a higher Source.

3. Our National Movement has weathered the storm even with our captain, David Yui, on the sick list. The Canton Convention was a real testing ground for several of our national staff and it is good to see them sticking to the guns. Some of us wish our general policy could swing a bit more rapidly into the winning of men and boys for service instead of for membership privileges.

So far as Boys' Work is concerned, I believe we can easily enlist large numbers of boys in a service membership, for which our present privileges obtainable through the payment of fees are not generally a good introduction and often serve as a handicap in interesting non-members or boys who are not able year after year to continue the necessary fees. A national policy on this matter of the service membership for boys would greatly help in the extension of our C.C.T.P. and would, I believe, help to disarm much of the recent country-wide criticism of the Association as an organization always looking for funds but rendering little service to society as a whole.

4. I have no personal problems to bring to the attention of the Committee nor any criticisms, unless the recommendation I submit herewith be interpreted as a criticism of Foreign Department policy. It is very likely, too, that the situation I observed when I was home in 1921 may have altered in the direction my recommendation would point. That it may seem presumptuous, I readily grant.

In our Association Movement, particularly in our Foreign Work, where voluntary native leadership in our several countries is so hard to secure, much emphasis has been rightly laid on lay leadership. We all realize the importance of developing volunteer leadership. Is it not then incumbent upon us in all departments of the work, at home or on the field, really to set ourselves to enlisting these laymen for service and training them even at the risk of a temporary loss of efficiency? If so, then the Foreign Department at home, where laymen for financial work are comparatively easy to secure, ought to be the model for our secretarial staffs in foreign countries. The Foreign Work does appeal to men, too, as few pieces of service do. Yet in New York it seemed to me our home office work was extremely "professionalized". Secretaries on the department staff and those home on furlough did much cultivation and financial solicitation that ought, it seems to me, to be done by laymen. Otherwise, how can we consistently talk about the importance of volunteer and lay leadership. Must not the home staff of the Foreign Department be the pace maker for us all in the matter.

I did not have much experience in financial work in New York City but I lived there for about five months, did some soliciting in and about the city, and was in the office a good deal. The absence of calls from volunteer and lay workers struck me forcibly. Not once did I see even a committee man, unless it was Mr. Murray upon one occasion, visiting the office and it seemed to be expected that they would come only for

called meetings. How much active solicitation the Committee did I do not know, but it seemed to me they and a large number of their friends ought to be more closely in touch with the enormous task of raising the money. Their expressed and visible interest in that would be reassuring to say the least. This, of course, I do not say in criticism of our splendid Foreign Department Committee but as a recommendation to our secretarial staff by whom the change of emphasis can be made in a way thoroughly to enlist the large body of laymen necessary for this financial work in and about New York.

5. During the past two years I have made a little progress with my reading and study. As to writing I am still so occupied with my immediate tasks that there seems only scant time for cultivation letters and a rather extensive correspondence with our National Committee Boys' Division. I long to get at some writing but the calls for outside service are many, even could I arrange my own Boys' Division tasks so as to permit of a bit of leisure. I am glad to report, however, that I have succeeded in getting the men on my staff this past year to produce a couple of Bible study courses for boys in Chinese.

Besides gleaning from Asia, the Atlantic, the New Republic, the National Geographic, the Rotarian, and the Chinese Recorder (our Chinese missionary magazine), what appeals to me as most worthwhile, I have read the following:

Fisher "The Brimming Cup"; Hutchinson "If Winter Comes";
Wells 2 volumes of "Outline of History"
Grayson "Adventures in Contentment"
Woodbridge "The Jonathan Papers"
Lyman "Experience of God in Modern Life"
Elliot and Curry "How Jesus Met Life Questions"

My Chinese language study I keep at persistently, aiming to work with my teacher an hour a day five days in the week.

I am trying in rather a haphazard way to do some research into China's past for the framework, nomenclature, and certain ideals or code better adapted to Chinese boys in our C.C.T.P. than our Occidental terms and ideas. I feel that in our work with boys such a Chinese setting or background with proper nomenclature would make a far greater appeal to Chinese boys, would be better understood and have more lasting results than the borrowed programs from the West.

Respectfully submitted,

Tientsin, China
Mar. 29, 1924.

Arthur G. Robinson

POINTS OF EMPHASIS IN BOYS' DIVISION POLICY & PROGRAM for 1923.

- AIM - I. To discover, enlist and train volunteer leaders for work with boys. Inter-church work will open up a field in which Boys' Work can most easily be promoted with our small staff and will put us most quickly in touch with the men we must discover and train for the work.
- II. To enlist our Bible study and other club members in definite tasks of unselfish service as the best means of developing strong character and of bringing them into a vital relationship with Jesus Christ and the Church.

/The two hundred and thirty boys enlisted in service last year should be kept at work with a more definite service program and goal constantly before them. Other work - activities of all sorts largely for self-improvement - must be subordinate to the enlistment in service.

MEANS of attaining our GOAL -

- Ia. A close cooperation with the church union and such local churches as seem ready for Boys' Work, keeping our responsibility in the Inter-Church Boys' Committee.
- b. Organizing a Boys' Workers' Discussion Club, to which not only church leaders would be welcome but any men interested in character-building work for boys.
- c. Securing more volunteer leaders for our Association clubs and activities, starting with their special interests.
- II.a. Carrying out the four-fold program of the C.C.T.P. with a steadier religious emphasis and a more careful Bible study program.
- b. Maintaining the Inner Circle group and getting these boys into regular service and into a campaign to bring their fellows to Christ.
- c. Promoting a health campaign this spring strong enough to enlist two hundred boys in service.
- d. Enlisting boys in educational work in the churches. (e.g. Poor boys' schools, health lectures, etc.)
- e. Holding a summer camp that will be a sort of training school in service - limiting attendance to boys willing to work and serve.
- f. More frequent religious meetings for our Bible study club members, addressed informally by men whose lives stand clearly for the ideals we are eager for the boys to have.