

Christian Workers
of the United States and Canada in Convention.
Written for the Review.

The ninth Annual Convention of Christian Workers in the United States and Canada has been in session for eight days, November 7-14, in the City of New Haven, Connecticut. The Convention was held under the auspices of the International Christian Workers Association.

This organization of Christian Workers is one of the youngest of our times, but is already one of the most honored. The first Convention, under its auspices, was conducted in Chicago for seven days in June 1886. This was followed in 1887 by the important gathering in Broadway Tabernacle, New York, at the time of which the late Ex-Mayor Howland of Toronto was chosen Canadian representative on the managing Committee of the Association. The third Convention was held in Detroit, the fourth in Buffalo, the fifth in Hartford, Connecticut, the Sixth in Washington, the seventh in Tremont Temple, Boston, the eighth in the Capital City of Georgia, and the ninth in New Haven, the educational centre of Western New England.

The benefits of these Conventions have not been confined to the cities in which they have been held, and to the thousands who have been within touch of the members who conducted them, but they have gone out through the printed reports and have been doing good in every land. Professor Graham Taylor speaking of one of the recent published reports calls it "one of the most invaluable treasures of methods of Christian work that our times have produced." It represents, according to another authority, every branch of Christian work being carried on in the world and gives unquestionably the most reliable and helpful information in regard to the various forms of Christian work of any thing ever published. The last published report of a Conventions proceedings has appeared under the title of "The Kings Business," and has been in use in a number of the Theological Institutions of this Continent as the text book on applied Christianity.

The preparations for the New Haven Convention were laid in prayer, and carried out with zeal and effectiveness. It is stated that there has not been as many pastors of all churches in New Haven present at one time in any one place for ten years as there were at the place in which the plans were carried out for the wondrously honored Convention which has just closed. All denominations were represented through pastors and laymen. A carefully written editorial in a paper not given to extravagant presentations of things religious states that no body of visitors that has visited New Haven has made so great an impression for good as the members of the Christian Workers Association, that no body of man has so stirred that Conservative City for many a year, and that no movement has been so manifestly successful in infusing new life into the existing religious agencies of the city as that which is carried on by the Christian Workers.

An unusually warm reception was given to the visitors at the opening session of the Convention. The governor of Connecticut in a delightful speech presented greetings in the name of the State, and thereafter states that the hope he has long entertained was now in views that recognition should be made of the sympathy which bound in a heavenly union the hearts of all who love God. The ministry of New Haven extended a welcome. The Mayor of the City welcomed the visitors to "the most beautiful City in the State, if not in America," a city noted for its churches, its schools, its historic University. The first sermon preached to the pilgrims after landing in America was delivered under a tree which stood not far from the spot on which now stands this building in which the Convention was held, and the Mayor made pertinent allusion to that fact. Among the many Conventions held in New Haven the Mayor said none would surpass the International Christian Workers Convention in its substance and importance. Yale University has a representative to extend greetings which were added to by the Chairman if the strong local Committee numbering with the ladies over sixty, and by the pastor of the Calvary Church in which the meetings of the Convention were held.

After these salutations the Association took hold of a seven days programme which was handled in a remarkably satisfactory manner. The Word of God had a large place in the sessions. Praise and prayer were conspicuous factors in the Convention. Christian evidences and testimonies formed one of the early themes. Dr. Gregg of the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church Brooklyn preached the Convention sermon, taking for his subject the testimony of the Law to the Book. Open air work, aid to the injured, class training for workers were the principal subjects at the Friday morning session of the first week. New phases of work in the Sunday-school union, Foreign Missionary work, work in Africa and in Japan took up an afternoon, while the evening was given to the consideration of work in Armenia, and to the delivery and reception of facts and figures through representatives from South Africa, Japan and Turkey.

Christian work among prisoners, and fallen women was considered on Saturday forenoon when Mrs Clarke of the Pacific Gardan Mission and Mrs. E. M. Whittemore spoke. The study of the Word of God, and God's work among boys were the chief subjects for the remaining portion of the first week. Religious services conducted by the visitors were held on Sunday in churches, in theatres, in jails, on the New Haven green, in almshouses, in the open air. Many a testimony came from the different audiences of conversions, and inspirations through these services

After half an hour's Bible Study on Monday morning the Convention dealt with social settlements, and Christian Industrial Homes. In the afternoon the work going on in Philadelphia and Chicago in connection with the Bible Institute was examined, followed in the closing part of the day by a consideration of the Loan and Relief Bureau, the Christian Industrial League Christian Citizenship and Temperance. Thereafter came the treatment of Rescue work, work among soldiers, sailors, lumbermen, miners and railroadmen. Colportage and Tract work and work in Orphanages, the progress of the Gospel among the Jews, the student volunteer movement, the work by Mr. Cainy, Men's Christian Association, the National Evangelization Society, the progress of Evangelization among the negroes in the South were taken up one by one. The pastor and revivals was an important topic, and the place of the Holy Spirit in all Christian work was emphasized.

Mr. Henry O'Brien, and Miss. W. J. MacDonald, both of Toronto, dealt with work among hospital patients, and the police, Miss MacDonald being the Canadian representative of the International Christian Police Association. Rev. Mr. Bone of the Welland Canal Mission gave inspiring presentations of the progress of the Lord's Work among the fresh water sailors of Canada. The Rev. A. H. Scott of Perth was invited by the Association to address the Convention upon "Special phases of Christian work in Canada." One of the chief phases he termed *prevention*, the keeping out of the young promising Dominion things that have cursed older nations. The endeavor to cope religiously with the incoming population from other lands, the attention that is given to the aboriginal races that are passing off the scene, and the Christian work engaged in in the French Canadian Province of the Dominion, were the other three phases presented. After the address Mr. Scott was honored with a Vice-Presidency of the International Christian Workers Association.

The press of the University City of Connecticut gave unusual space to the proceedings of the Convention. The building in which the Sessions were held was quite unequal to the requirements of the occasion. Day after day overflow audiences were addressed by members of the Association. There are many who will accord with Rev. Russell H. Conwell who has succeeded the Rev. R. A. Terry in the Presidency of the Christian Workers Association, when he says, "I feel that to attend one of these Conventions for five days would be better than two years in a seminary, and for quickening of the Christian life and infusing people with spiritual power and activity and a knowledge of the very best methods, I feel that there are no Conventions on the face of the earth to compare with the Christian Workers Convention."