

be a University student. Mr. Peck seems to admit that applause is not really desirable, but he "adores the good lungs" of a man who shouts at a meeting. Well, we all admire "good lungs," we all admire "enthusiasm," we all like to see a man "act naturally;" but if the Y.M.C.A. is to fulfil its function as a teacher, it must show that there are times and places better suited to the exercise of good lungs than the Friday evening prayer meeting, and it must teach that it is a very imperfect "enthusiasm," and the "naturalness" of children, which applaud the utterance of worn-out formulas. In other words it is the duty of the Y.M.C.A. to teach, to lift its members to a constantly rising level of religious thought. Once we have steadily set our faces in that direction the question of applause will lose its significance.

Now as to the *choice of leaders*, and to the best way of conducting the meeting as far as they are concerned, Mr. Peck says, "I quite disagree with 'Student.' I don't think our Y.M.C.A. is a place where we go to hear lectures, or that the success of the meeting is entirely dependent on the efforts of the chairman." Again I must plead to be more carefully interpreted. One half of my criticism was taken up with suggestions as to improvement in what some would call the purely devotional part of the service. I have been careful to avoid the very crime of which I am now accused. The very fact that the first half of my article was of this character is surely in itself a disproof of Mr. Peck's second statement. No, I did say, nor do I think that "the success of the meeting is entirely dependent on the efforts of the chairman." So far from this being the case, I was again careful to define exactly what a wisely chosen leader—and certainly we should have no other, or he is not a *leader* in reality—should be able to do. "The business of the leader," I said, is "not to preach a sermon (not to give a 'lecture'), but to strike the key note for the evening, and to say with precision what central thought he has found in the text;" and I may add that I am unwilling to crown any man who cannot do that—my leader in devotion either in the Y.M.C.A. or anywhere else. Further, to show how far the thought of turning the Y.M.C.A. into a lecture hall was from my purpose, the original criti-

cism went on to say that "this central thought should, as far as possible, mould the whole meeting—the prayers and the singing as well as the discussion."

On the ground that in College we have men in all stages of development, Mr. Peck says that "to his mind the best method is the one allowing all, without distinction a chance to speak."

Again I must simply beg to be reported correctly. I said after the leader had in brief and precise terms stated what he found valuable in the text "let others from all years in Arts and Divinity to whom the leader has spoken, or who have something really worth saying, then carry on the meeting." Surely the meaning here is plain. There is no ambiguity about the words. They mean exactly what they say.

What Mr. Peck has to say about the necessity of better truth being expressed in the Y.M.C.A. is also rather confusing. On the one hand he maintains that it would be a good thing if we had more of the best religious thought of the college which he says has its home in Divinity Hall. But on the other hand with a tender regard for young students Mr. Peck puts in a plea for "commonplaces," and asks "student" himself to consider whether he did not once regard such as "the very truth." No, "student" was never so satisfied with mere religious phraseology as not to welcome something better. Every man yearns for higher truth than he possesses, and it is surely for the Y.M.C.A. one of the most important influences in the college, to do its share in the education of the student. I boldly declare that it is the duty of the Y.M.C.A. to move in a sphere of religious thought far above professional catchwords and revival phrases, and that it ought to look on the utterance of such as excrescences foreign to its true life. What I am insisting on is this, that if some men do at an early stage of development identify "commonplace" with the "very truth," the Y.M.C.A. is falling short of its high privilege if it does not lead its members to a higher conception of what the truth really is, and that not spasmodically but steadily and in every possible way. Mr. Peck recognises the necessity for better truth, but he throws too bright a halo round the "com-