

This brings me to the second great change in the Y.M. C.A. situation - the reawakened interest in program. Last fall teams from the national staff conducted local training institutes in several key centers, for laymen as well as secretaries. This month a conference of all General Secretaries is being called to study the question of a three-year activities program. There are several new places where China is going to look to the Y for leadership, now that civil war seems ended and she starts to set her house in order. One is the whole field of citizenship training, the keystone to the arch of the new Chinese democracy. Already the Y has added to its national staff an author on municipal matters of national repute, who at real personal sacrifice has given up his post with the Hankow Municipal Council to take hold of our citizenship training program, in which municipal matters will play a leading part.

Another is the rural question - the improving of the condition of more than three-quarters of China's population. Much has been said and little done about this great task. Two years ago our national rural work secretary launched an experiment in a little country community of 2500. He put up no Y.M. C.A. signs; his first six months were spent in overcoming suspicion and century-old inertia. Every change that has been effected has been done not from the outside but by the villagers themselves. Under his inspiration they have converted a dusty, rat and snake-ridden Taoist temple into a community center for lectures, entertainments, classes and handicrafts. They have converted the cemetery which lay in the center of the village, with its exposed, rotting coffins, into a playground for their children. Simply by being their friend this ardent young Chinese has so changed the moral life of the community, particularly as to gambling and opium-smoking, that the gambling den already shows signs of going out of business! He has helped them organize a cooperative credit society. He has revived an old handicraft industry by which they increase their income and make use of their abundant spare time. His work has attracted the attention of the government and of many individuals. The former governor of the province, after quietly looking over the work, went back and copied it in his native village. Hongkong, Canton and Sunning, in the south, will shortly take up similar enterprises. This little experiment, working on practically no budget, has within it, I believe, the power to help transform the Chinese nation.

I wish I dared take time to tell something of the work being done by such an Association as that in Shanghai; of its model village, like a bit of heaven in the squalor of one of the poorest industrial areas around Shanghai; of its newly-opened social center giving rudimentary education and medical aid in a great cotton-spinning district, where the average operative earns \$10 Gold a month; of its plans to make its magnificent new building among other things an intellectual center for students and a seat of adult education. But that story alone would cover many pages.