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CHURCH CONTROL OF THE STUDENT CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS

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Secretary Christian Association of the University of Pennsylvania.

If "Education without character" is useless, then religion, which is the well-spring of character, is a necessity in every seat of learning. It seems to be almost literally true that religion, having been put out of the door of some of our universities, has come in again at the window. It is most interesting to note also that the Church, which is the organic expression of the Christian religion, has begun once more to take its proper place in our great seats of learning. Other organizations which claim to represent the Church but still remain independent must give way before the Church itself, or lose themselves in its corporate life.

It is this point of view that leads me to advocate the complete merging or absorption of the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations in the Church itself, in our great University communities. These organizations must simply become the Church itself at work among the students—not the servant of the Church or the agent of the Church, but the Clearing House Medium of the Church, made necessary by the different natural divisions of the Church represented in these student centres. Historically and theoretically the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A. are based on the Church and are in charge of the Church members, but practically these Associations have become independent and isolated from the Church, especially in the Colleges and Universities. The Student Christian Associations must be willing and even eager to lose their names, organizations and identity, if necessary, in order to express true Christianity and the organic Church in University life,—and it may be that these Associations will become "the grain of wheat" and lose themselves for His sake and for His Church.

If I may bear personal testimony out of fifteen years experience at Pennsylvania,—I have found the Church in many of its divisions, more than ready to meet this attitude with confidence and support. The Christian Association has become the voluntary religious medium of the University, entrusted with the chapel services and all the religious and social work activities of the institution, while the Church and denominational organizations in Philadelphia use the Association as the natural channel through which they reach their own students in the University and bring them into the churches of the city. This means in practice that the name of the Association is in the background and often does not appear at all—it means that

members of the churches are *ipso facto* in the membership of the Association; that Church members are affiliated by the Association with the local Philadelphia churches, and that the denominational representatives in Pennsylvania constitute the "staff" of the Christian Association, holding also official positions in the local churches of the city.

The National Student Young Men's Christian Association is facing a crisis which demands the immediate attention of Church and student leaders alike. The great leader of the Movement is completely isolated from the actual problems on account of his overwhelming world-wide responsibilities. The organization is such that the great Church leaders will not accept positions in the Movement,—there is no Church-consciousness in the Association. Little can be done until the great leaders of the Church come forward to take possession of the accumulated experience of the Student Christian movements and adapt it to the uses of the Church.

The need of the present is a Church Student Christian movement in which the membership shall consist of the members of those churches which enter the movement; whose local leaders shall be well-trained Churchmen of standing in their own communions and whose national leaders shall have the standing of bishops and other leaders of the Church.

The United Boards of Education of the churches or other bodies officially charged with the responsibility for the denominational work among students should send representatives into the large cosmopolitan institutions to unite the Church members from the faculty and student body for the purpose of creating a local Board of Control consisting of mature citizens from the local churches of the community. This local Board would naturally select and direct the denominational representatives in consultation with the National Church leaders and experts in work among students. These local organizations could send a student and Board representative to a national student work council which could determine the proper national organization and could select and direct the national leaders.

Some such move as this would secure a real democratic organization within the Church and under Church control with student initiative, and would certainly unite the sectarian societies, the Student Pastors and the Christian Associations. It is essential that this union movement should spring from the Church and should involve a thorough rearrangement of present methods.

This suggestion is made without consultation either with the Church leaders or with the National Y. M. C. A. in the hope that local problems may be simplified and better results secured in local institutions. The local leaders are constantly overwhelmed and discouraged by the application of methods on the part of Church or Association National leaders which are unwise and inefficient in the local situation.

There must be unity in national leadership and this leadership should be inter-church and permanent rather than independent and ephemeral.

All true Association leaders are Churchmen and would rejoice to see the Church in its organic capacity take charge of the work among those who will be the future leaders of the nations.

Let us lose ourselves in Him and conserve our service in His permanent society—the Church.

COLLEGE CHAPEL AND PUBLIC LECTURES

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I. THE COLLEGE CHAPEL.

In many of our largest institutions no stated chapel exercises of a religious nature are held. There is, therefore, in these schools, no stated opportunity to present before the student body material for religious education.

In many schools attendance upon chapel exercises is voluntary, but so meager are the numbers present that it cannot be said that the student body derives benefit from the exercises. On the other hand, in some schools where voluntary chapel is the order, such is the sentiment created by the attitude of the faculty, that practically the entire student body is found at chapel.

In other schools chapel attendance is required from three to six times a week, and there is usually present a large body of students.

Where the entire faculty is expected to be present the coming together of faculty and students in daily worship becomes a most impressive and profitable interval in the daily program. Where members of the faculty rarely appear at chapel in those schools where attendance is required, their absence naturally is resented by the students.

Where the service is a dull and monotonous routine, a rather dry and juiceless performance, the students regard it as on the whole, a waste of time. On the other hand, there are schools, in which much care is bestowed upon the chapel hour and every effort is made to render it a source of great profit and inspiration. One institution spends more than five thousand dollars annually upon its chapel service, selecting as speakers men of great repute in the religious world. In most schools, however, the leadership is entirely in the hands of the