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Warren P. Beehan Ph. D. ^a

^a Director Biblical and Social Studies , Secretarial Institute and Training School , Chicago, Illinois

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A Study of a Students' Guild in a State University

WARREN P. BEEHAN, Ph. D.

Director Biblical and Social Studies, Secretarial Institute and Training School,
Chicago, Illinois

THE BAPTIST STUDENTS' GUILD OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN IN OUTLINE.

I. *The Field.* 1.—300 Baptist students in a student body numbering nearly 5,000. 2.—At least 175 of these are in the distinctively professional schools. 3.—Between 50 per cent. and 60 per cent. of these students are already members of Baptist churches; the others are adherents by choice, or through family relationships.

II. *The Social, Moral and Spiritual Conditions Calling for Distinctive Work Among Students.* 1.—The absence of home restraints. 2.—The many opportunities for self-assertiveness. 3.—The temptations springing from a loneliness which too frequently the church does not seriously attempt to forestall or to mitigate. 4.—The desire for society which if not at first satisfied in wholesome associations makes the student an easy prey to the many inducements offered by undesirable associates and questionable places of amusement. 5.—The pressure of university work which, together with the inevitable reaction, leads to the almost exclusive concentration of the student's attention upon the intellectual and social interests, thus crowding out the religious. 6.—The spirit of inquiry, stimulated by the scientific, historical and philosophical studies, enters the field also of religious life and belief, demanding a sympathetic and intelligent treatment which too often is not given, either by members of the faculty, local religious leaders, or home counsellors. Great spiritual unrest, drifting, even scepticism result. 7.—The seriousness of these conditions which are to be found in every educational institution is heightened by certain characteristics of a state institution. a. The presence of a much larger number of denominational students than attend strictly denominational schools, deserving even more attention than students in such schools. b. The presence of a larger number of individuals, both in faculty and student body who are either indifferent or hostile to religious thought and life. c. The absence of a unified, definite, positive relationship with the churches and church life on the part of the University. d. The absence of any kind of a religious service held under distinctively university auspices. 8.—These conditions are faced by young men and women at the most critical period of life between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four. 9.—This condition is further aggravated by the fact that the pastor of the local

church has his hands so fully occupied with his regular parish work that no matter how great his desire he has neither time nor strength to give to the student body with its many problems. 10.—As a result, the church, no matter what the denomination, either is losing absolutely the interest and activity of a large per cent. of the young student life once within its membership, or is rearing by its "*laissez-faire*" policy a body of untrained, religiously and denominationally uninstructed men and women, a body too, that is composed of those who by ability and intellectual training ought to be the intelligent aggressive leaders in the church, even as they are destined to be in the professional and commercial world. Herein we find an answer to the question—"Why are not more professional men, once Christians, actively interested in Christian work?"

III. *The Purpose of the Movement.* To conserve and develop the moral and spiritual life of the Baptist student, to endeavor to hold him in intelligent and sympathetic relationship to his denomination, to render him capable of contributing more largely to the advancement of the Kingdom. The purpose is not primarily for the sake of the church, but through the church for the sake of the Kingdom.

IV. *The Conviction.* "Without hindrance, or embarrassment, it is the privilege and duty of the several denominations to keep before such of the academic body as elect, the historical and spiritual significance, the rights and interests of the denomination." The danger to the Kingdom comes not so much from the intelligent, fair-minded and loyal denominationalist, but from him who is made aggressively sectarian by lack of training and wise guidance.

V. *The Material Equipment.* 1.—A three-story brick building, 52 x 66 feet on a lot 140 x 160, containing: a. Sleeping accommodations for fifteen men. b. Reading, reception, dining rooms and office; all well equipped. 2.—Tennis court and recreation grounds.

VI. *The Organization.* (Extracts from the Constitution and By-Laws):

ARTICLE II. OBJECT.

The object of this organization shall be:

1. To conserve and develop the spiritual, denominational, and social life of the Baptist students of the University.
2. To co-operate with other local, denominational student guilds, and with similar Baptist organizations in other colleges and universities.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP.

This guild shall consist of an active, associate, and honorary membership.

Sec. 1. The active membership shall consist of students, members or adherents of Baptist churches, who shall sign this constitution and pledge themselves to regular service in some department of the local church or guild activities.

Sec. 2. The associate membership shall consist of all Baptist members of the faculty who shall sign this constitution.

Sec. 3. The honorary membership shall consist of all persons, or societies, that shall contribute to the support of the guild financially, and such others as the guild shall elect.

FROM THE BY-LAWS.

Sec. 1. There shall be three regular committees: Membership, Religious Education and Social.

Sec. 2. These committees, with the exception of the chairmen, shall be appointed by the Cabinet within one week after the annual meeting. The number of each committee shall be left to the discretion of the Cabinet.

VII. *The Channels of Support.* 1.—The joint appropriation of the Michigan Baptist State Convention and The American Baptist Home Missionary Society, amounting to \$1,500 per year. 2.—Pledged subscriptions, running for three years, amounting to \$500 per year, from churches, societies, and individuals. 3.—Rentals of student-rooms in the Hall. 4.—Gifts.

VIII. *The Parochial Activity of the Director.* 1.—Personal Work. a. Visitation. b. Consultation. c. The various means of personal contact. 2.—Social Work. a. Socials and receptions in both hall and church. b. Group suppers in hall or at Director's home. c. Invitations to the homes of Director, Pastor, church members, or students who live in town. d. Annual Guild Banquet. e. Glee Club. 3.—Educational Work. a. Through study classes, Sundays and week days. (1) The various lines of Bible Study, especially historical. (2) Church History. (3) Personal Work. (4) Missions. (5) Sunday school Organization, Principles and Methods. (6) Denominational History, Doctrines and Activity. (7) Christian Life Problems. b. Lectureships. (1) Serial. (2) Occasional. c. Library Facilities. (1) Reference. (2) Circulating. d. Training through definite service. (1) Local church Sunday school, B. Y. P. U., Men's Brotherhood, King's Daughters, etc. (2) Mission Sunday school. (3) Evangelistic Band. (4) Various forms of Social Service.

IX. *Points of Contact with the Local Church.* 1.—Through hearty co-operation of Pastor and Director. 2.—The full membership of students in the local church. 3.—Student memberships, whereby, without dropping their real membership in home church, they are received as student members in local church during term of University residence. 4.—Through individual co-operation in local church work.

X. *Relationship with Y. W. C. A. and Y. M. C. A.* 1.—Full recognition of the function and opportunities of the Association work. 2.—The endeavor not to duplicate Bible and Missionary Study courses. 3.—Certain Association classes conducted by Director. 4.—The endeavor to enlist Baptist students in Association work and to use the Association as the best point of contact between Christian and non-Christian students as the great channel of missionary service in the student field. 5.—The Guild is not in any sense a rival of, but the recruiting and training ground for the Association service as well as for church activity.