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A STUDY OF THE MORAL AND RELIGIOUS LIFE
OF 251 PREPARATORY SCHOOL STUDENTS
IN THE UNITED STATES.¹

By F. S. BROCKMAN, Shanghai, China.

Four years ago, Dr. Luther Gulick and myself sent a letter and accompanying questions to a carefully selected list of college and theological seminary students. My aim was a purely inductive one. I wanted simply the plain unvarnished facts. It was felt that it would not do to question young students about these matters, accordingly I secured my data exclusively from college and theological students. I have not commented on the facts secured to any great extent, as they carry their own message. Neither do I attempt wide generalizations. These are the facts plainly stated from 251 persons. They were from many institutions, and included North, South, East, and West in their geographical extent. In the preliminary study of the topic, I was much helped by papers in Clark University publications. Since coming to China, I have compiled the data secured in America.

I can but feel that the most successful religious work depends to some extent on investigations of the religious life. This paper can be viewed as merely a scouting trip. That it may be of some service to the leaders of young men in educational institutions, is my earnest hope.

Two hundred and fifty-one replies were received from students in about seventy-five different colleges, universities, and theological seminaries, in all sections of the United States east of the Rocky Mountains. Almost without exception, the blanks were filled out with seeming care and conscientiousness.

The average age of those replying was $23\frac{1}{2}$ years. More were 23 than any other age. None were under 16; only 14 were over 30. Blanks were not sent to preparatory school students because it was thought that the college students would be able to give more intelligent and discriminating replies. On

¹The accompanying paper was made by a fellow worker of mine, Mr. F. S. Brockman. He was personally known to the men to whom the blanks were sent. The care with which they were filled out was a result of this personal acquaintance. Mr. Brockman was then one of the secretaries of the college department of the American Young Men's Christian Association. He now has charge of that work in China.

LUTHER GULICK.

the other hand, blanks were not sent to older persons because it was thought the college student would retain a more vivid recollection of his school days. It should be borne constantly in mind throughout the study that the replies are thus from the standpoint of the maturer adolescent. They are from the standpoint also very largely—as the replies to Question 4 reveal—of Christians. From the nature of the questions, it was not deemed wise to distribute them indiscriminately among a body of students.

Age of Joining the Church. There were 247 replies to this question. Ten were not church members. The average age of joining the church is $15\frac{1}{4}$ years. More joined the church at 14 than at any other age. It is perhaps worthy of note that the average age of joining the church is a little lower than that of conversion, and that 14 is the age when the largest number joined the church, while 17 is the corresponding age of conversion.

Age of Conversion. Two hundred and forty-six students replied to this question. Twelve said they were not converted; five did not know whether they were converted or not; 37 could give no definite time of conversion; 189 knew the date. The average age of the conversion of these 189 is $15\frac{1}{2}$ years. From Table I, it will be seen that a larger number were converted at 17 than during any other year. There were only three who asked for further explanation of the term conversion, or otherwise gave indication that they doubted the reality of the experience. These replies were as follows:

(1) "Not in the technical sense your term indicated. Did not become a Christian. Always have been."

(2) "The term is so indefinite I do not know what you mean."

(3) "What do you mean? I am being turned about every year. I started a new life at age of ten, but have not yet reached the stature of the fullness of a man in Christ Jesus."

A large percentage of the 37 who could not remember the time of their conversion described it as a gradual process. Here are a few typical replies of those who said more than simply, "*I do not know when:*"

(1) "Grew up in the church and had no definite time."

(2) "It has been a gradual, but almost unbroken growth of love of God since infancy."

(3) "Was raised in church and Sunday School. Not suddenly converted."

(4) "The process was gradual, not sudden."

(5) "Grew up in church. Don't know of such a stage. I have no date."

(6) "Yes. I think the growth was gradual, and not due to any particular incident."

(7) "I know of no definite moment which I can look back to as the time of my conversion."

TABLE I.
Age of Conversion.

It was interesting to see whether the replies threw any light upon such questions as these :

(1) Was the Christian experience of those suddenly converted different from that of those with whom conversion was a gradual growth? In other words, are Christians who have been suddenly converted more or less apt to live right than those gradually converted?

(2) Is there any relation between Christian homes and the method of conversion?

The blanks were carefully examined with these two points in mind. There was no appreciable difference discernible between the Christian life of those suddenly and gradually converted. The home influences of those gradually converted, however, were better than those giving exact time of conversion, the distinctly Christian homes where father and mother were both active Christians in one case being 84%, and in the other 73%. It is doubtful, however, whether the numbers are large enough to justify any conclusion.

Table I shows the number of conversions for each year. It

TABLE II.

Age of Greatest Responsiveness to Religious Ideas.

is compiled from the replies to Question 3. Table II is compiled from the answers to Question 5, and shows the age of greatest responsiveness to religious ideas. The similarity between the curves in Tables I and II, and the prominence of teens in both tables leave little doubt that with most adolescents the years about 17 are apt to mark a religious crisis. There has been much written and much study given within the past few years to the physiological and psychological aspects of adolescence. The physiologist has called attention to the increased volume of the heart, the broadening of the shoulders, the hardening of the muscles, the elongation of the vocal chords, and other physical changes which mark the dawn of this period, and has laid down the principles which underlie the physical training of youth. The psychologists have studied the hopes, dreams, tempestuous passions, influx of new sensations, and general unstable mental equilibrium which characterizes youth and young manhood, and pedagogy is being readjusted in the

light of their investigations. Facts like the above lead one to ask whether the religious aspects of adolescence do not need to be studied as well. Certainly no religious leader can look at the facts which these three tables reveal without raising the question whether the seventeen-year-old youth has been given the attention which the moral and religious crisis of his time of life demands. The day when the young man is most prone to drift out of the church and easiest to turn to the church is the same. The Spirit of God is sovereign, and may deal with a man at any time; no one can set bounds for His working, but the wise leader in Christian work may reverently study His usual times of visitation and modes of operation. There is an element of transitoriness in the religious as well as in many other instincts. It has its flood and its ebb. It has its time of ripening and then unless cultivated and fixed, a time of almost disappearance. Prof. James says concerning the intellectual life of students: "Outside of their own business the ideas under twenty-five are the ideas that serve for life. Disinterested curiosity is gone, the mental grooves and channels set, the power of assimilation gone. It would probably lead to a more earnest temper on the part of college students if they had less belief in their future intellectual potentialities, and could be brought to realize that whatever physics, political economy, or philosophy, they are now acquiring, are for better or for worse the physics, political economy, or philosophy that will have to serve them to the end." It is an equal folly to trust in the future religious potentialities of a young man of seventeen.

Motives for Becoming A Christian. There were 244 students who answered Question 6, giving the motives which induced them to become Christians. In order to give a better idea of the replies, a few are given in full. They are selected at random except that the brief replies simply naming a motive in the blanks are omitted, as they are shown in the list which is given later:

(1) "This is a hard question. I doubt not all these were components of the resultant motive. The uppermost thing was approval of God." (Age 22, conversion, gradual process.)

(2) "When a young child, I became a Christian as I thought; it was through fear of hell. My real Christian life began with a revival under Mr. H. I was strongly influenced by a longing for clean life and heart." (Age 19, converted young, but don't know just when.)

(3) "I think the reason I became a Christian was because I loved my parents, and they taught me to love God; but I shall have to say I have done Christian acts which I should n't have done had no one been looking at me, but I have done a few when no one knew it." (Age 17, converted, 7.)

(4) "I grew tired of living a *moral* life. I felt that there was a higher life for me. I was strongly convicted of sin. There was also a deep sense of God's love for me." (Age 25, converted, 25.)

(5) "Not altogether on account of conviction of sin. I was reared

by Christian parents, and joined the church without much thought one way or the other." (Age 25, don't know when converted.)

(6) "I was led to become a Christian from a deep conviction of sin and a desire to get others to be saved." (Age 28, converted, 14.) (Very characteristic reply.)

(7) "First, external punishment, and second, my recognition of the intrinsic value of Christianity to man and nation, and my conviction that without it the true, manly, noble life is impossible." (Age 22, converted, 14.)

(8) "Never any fear in it. I don't like the idea now. It seems to me to be obsolete—no remorse, nor conviction, but God's love and an ambition to lead an useful life." (Age 20, converted, 11.)

(9) "Conviction of sin and feeling of God's love." (Age 23, converted, 13.) (These two motives are often thus joined.)

(10) "Was much dissatisfied with my life, felt a constant unrest. It was not fear of eternal punishment, but soul hunger which I can't describe. And I had no doubt but that all the rest of the family would be saved, and to think of being separated from them was terrible; and then the consistent life of my mother made me long for the power to become like her. And when I realized how unthankful I had been, and how much I needed God's help to live even a decent life, I called on Him and found salvation." (Age 33, converted, 20.)

(11) "It was the love of God which influenced me. Great revivals had had very little influence upon me, but the love of God influenced me as nothing else and led me to a full submission to Him." (Age 28, converted, 21.)

(12) "Fear of torment, conviction of sin, and especially a desire for God's love and freedom." (Age 34, converted, 16.)

(13) "Desire for approval of others to some extent. Most of all, the sense that I ought to be a Christian in view of all that God had done to that end." (Age 27, converted, 16.)

(14) "Owing to the fact that I was carefully guarded by true Christian parents, I felt no strong convictions of sin; but I became a Christian more from a feeling of God's and a desire for approval of others." (Age 24, converted, unknown.)

(15) "I believed it the right thing to do." (Age 25, converted, 18.)

(16) "I do not believe any had much influence. A natural religious demand was always in me. I am religious because I *feel better* so." (Age 23, converted, unknown.)

(17) "If I know myself rightly, remorse and conviction of sin and a desire to do good in the world led me to become a Christian." (Age 22, converted, 17.)

(18) "I think that I am a Christian. If so, it is because of the carefully thought out decision that to be a Christian was sensible, reasonable and right. Parents' influence strong also." (Age 19, age of conversion unknown.)

The motives mentioned, with the number of students naming each, is as follows:

Fear of eternal punishment, 69.

Remorse, 29.

Conviction of sin, 104.

Feeling of God's love, 86.

Desire for approval of others, 32.

Can't tell, 5.

Desire for the rewards of God's children, 2.

Desire to get the joys of heaven, 4.

Feeling that a Christian must be most happy, 1.

- Desire to meet my own in the beyond, 1.
- Search for happiness, 2.
- Desire for the peace of the Christian life, 1.
- Desire for Christian service, 1.
- Philanthropic desire, 2.
- Desire to help others escape sin I had dealt in, 3.
- An ambition to be somebody and do something great, 1.
- Realized it to be the plan of salvation and wished to participate, 1.
- Determination to make the world better by my life, 1.
- Desire for what would give me the most profitable life, 1.
- Desire for a life which would best influence fellowmen to become Christians, 1.
- Desire to do good, 1.
- Conviction only way to realize object of life, 3.
- Dissatisfaction with my life, 3.
- Desire to be better, 4.
- Recognition of intrinsic value of Christianity to man and the nation, 1.
- As I was, I could not accomplish that which life was meant for, 1.
- Realization it was the only life to live, 1.
- Realization the powerful life is the spirit-filled life, 1.
- Conviction all best men are religious, 1.
- Conviction that without it true, manly, noble life was impossible, 2.
- Ambition to lead useful life, 3.
- Try to use every effort to lead better life, 1.
- Christianity better fitted for me than any other religion, 1.
- Feeling of oughtness, 2.
- Sense of duty, 13.
- Conviction I ought to be for Christ, 1.
- Feeling I was working contrary to God's great plan, 1.
- Conviction it was right thing, 7.
- Feeling it was best way to live, 1.
- Wanted to be right, 8.
- Desire to do right, 2.
- Longing for clean life and heart, 2.
- When I realized God willed my salvation, 1.
- Carefully thought out decision that to be a Christian was right and sensible, 1.
- Desire to improve my life, 2.
- Consciousness of my untenable position, 1.
- Feeling of condemnation that I was wrong rather than definite fear of eternal punishment, 1.
- Inability to free myself, 1.
- Sense of my own weakness, 3.
- Inability to live right without God, 3.
- Realization of Christ's power to deliver me in time of temptation, 1.
- Need of a saviour, 2.
- Feeling that there was something lacking in my life; that it was not what it ought to be, 1.
- Some indescribable drawing toward Godly things and the church, 1.
- Soul hunger. Can't describe it, 1.
- Yearning for what I did not have, 1.
- Inborn inclination, 1.
- God wanted me and I wanted Him, 1.
- Desire for God's love, 5.
- Desire to be in unison with God, 1.
- Desire to please God, 2.
- Desire for God's guidance, 1.
- Desire to get right with God, 1.

Sense of Christ's desire to save, 1.
 Love of Christ ever before me, 1.
 Love for Christ or God, 4.
 My promise to do so if God spared my mother, 1.
 My mother's counsel, 1.
 Desire to be at one with Christian friends, 1.
 Feeling that now was the time if I ever expected to, 4.
 To do myself justice, 1.
 Tired of living a moral life, 1.
 Desire to be right with the world, 1.
 Trained up to it; never knew anything else, 1.

Although many motives are almost the same, I have thought it best to thus give the entire list so that even the shades of meaning may be detected. We may classify them roughly as follows:

- (1) Conviction of sin, 104.
- (2) Feeling of God's (or Christ's) love, 86.
- (3) Fear of eternal punishment, 69.
- (4) Feeling that it was right to be a Christian, 44.
- (5) Feeling that Christianity was necessary to the highest usefulness to their fellowmen, 33.
- (6) Desire for approval of others, 32.
- (7) Remorse, 29.
- (8) Desire for the reward of God's children, 11.
- (9) Sense of weakness, need of God's strength, 11.
- (10) Desire for God's love and fellowship, 11.
- (11) Indescribable drawing, 4.
- (12) Miscellaneous, 12.

The following are some of the impressions and questions which abide after a study of the replies to this question:

(1) What have been called the "old-fashioned motives" are far the strongest. It seems unfortunate now that any motives were given in the blanks. This doubtless called special attention to them and caused them to be mentioned oftener than otherwise. It is also doubtful whether such expressions as remorse and conviction of sin, stand for similar phenomena in every case, being terms often used in religious meetings and literature. Even when these considerations are taken into account, however, the predominance of the conviction of sin and love to God is most significant. The wickedness of sin against a loving God is still the fact to press upon young men if one would be most successful in bringing them to change their lives.

(2) It is equally true that fear is a most powerful motive. The fear of hell is much stronger than the hope of heaven. On the other hand, seven students took occasion to call attention to the fact that no fear existed in their minds, and their replies seem to indicate a revulsion of feeling at the very thought of its being mentioned as a motive.

(3) The number influenced by the feeling that Christianity was necessary to their highest usefulness to their fellowmen,

and that it was right to be a Christian, or by what may be called philanthropic and philosophic motives, deserve our attention. When taken together, they are one of the strongest appeals. Their frequent mention is the more striking because they were not named in the blanks. Dr. Burnham, of Clark University, in a most able article on adolescence, *Pedagogical Seminary*, Vol. I, p. 174, has called attention to the great influx of philanthropic desire, and the birth of the philosophic spirit during adolescence. These replies tend to confirm his conclusions: The Christian worker may assume with confidence that most young men want to be right, wish to have their lives in harmony with the plan of God, and therefore, that a strong appeal to their sense of duty will not be without avail. He may feel sure also that to hold out the possibilities of usefulness to a Christian, and the certain injury to many others besides one's self in living in sin, will find a ready response in an almost fanatical love for men which is now ripening in the young man. This is the day when he is a reformer and dreams of the time when he will purify church and state, break the chains of the social slaves, etc., etc. He needs but to be shown that none of his lofty ideals are possible without becoming a Christian, and at once he has an overwhelming motive for becoming one. This is why a missionary address is sometimes the best gospel message. Frequent appeal should be made to the heroic.

(4) The desire for the approval of others is mentioned oftener perhaps than one would have expected. It is frequently marked, however, as the secondary and less strong of two motives, and almost never given alone—the parents or some other member of the family are usually mentioned as the ones whose approval was desired. The family tie is still strong.

(5) One naturally asks the question whether there is any relation between motives and the age of conversion. The replies were divided into three groups according to the age of conversion: (a) 5-12; (b) 13-17; (c) 18-35, and then examined with reference to motives. Fear of eternal punishment, conviction of sin, and feeling of God's love, were equally strong with all ages. The philosophic and philanthropic motives were equally strong in (b) and (c), but almost wanting in (a). The only instance where the sinner's love for God or Christ was a motive was with children under 12.

(6) Another question which arises is whether there is any connection between motives and stability and consistency in religious life. Here also a longer number of papers would need to be examined. No certain light was thrown on the question by an examination of the papers.

Reasons for Not Becoming A Christian before leaving Prepar-

atory School. There were 61 replies to Question 10 which may be arranged in a table as follows :

	Partly.	Yes.	Total.
(1) Was it because you did n't believe Christianity to be true?	5	1	6
(2) Was it because you postponed a decision?	7	29	36
(3) Was it because you were unwilling to give up something?	2	21	23
(4) Was it because you were repelled by men or methods?	10	7	17
(5) Was it because of the influence of companions?	14	7	21
(6) Was it because you were not approached?	5	11	16

The following are in answer to sub-question under (3), "what things were you unwilling to give up?"

Fear of not having a good time.

Giving up fun and being solemn and sober.

So-called doubtful amusements.

Rebelled against idea of the ministry.

Ambition.

Ideas of independence and enjoyment. Christianity seemed too strict and sanctimonious.

Intimacy with old friends.

Fear of ministry or missions.

Impurity and drink.

Put off decision that I might satisfy sexual desires.

Profession of law.

Profession of law.

Fear of living a Christian life.

A good time.

Impurity had some hold, but mostly companions.

Dancing.

Love of the world.

Dancing probably.

Liberty from appearing stiff and saintly.

The following are some of the replies to (6) which indicate the demand in the preparatory schools for personal work :

(1) No one really asked me and urged me to become a Christian after the age of 12. Living an outwardly good, moral life, they may have thought I was a Christian. But for those six years, I was almost persuaded and no one ever tried to get me fully persuaded and definitely decided. I used to avoid prayer-meetings, especially revival-meetings, for fear of being asked.

(2) I do not remember *any one* asking me to become a Christian during my life-time. Perhaps there was an occasion, though.

(3) No one ever spoke to me, and so I was not in the least interested.

(4) There was no friend to whom I could trust, and who would help me to keep the resolutions I made.

The following replies will indicate the delicacy and difficulty of work with young men of this age, and the need of more skill in it :

(1) "I think one strong reason for my neglect of and distaste for Christian life was my parents strongly urging me to be a minister, for

which calling I had and have no inclination or call. Also the attempt to preach when I secretly disliked the work."

(2) "It has generally seemed to me as if the Christian's interest in men's soul is a forced one. It is all done for Christ's sake and not for the sake of the individual. It is the Christian's duty to do all he can to save souls, and he seems to me to take very little interest in saving the man because he has any interest in the man himself. For this reason, no one has very much influence with me."

(3) I went forward at about 15 at a revival meeting held by a man who appealed strongly to our feelings, and I was not really converted, and I have noticed that most of his converts have become back-sliders. I think this one episode caused a feeling of hostility that lasted some years. I think it had a bad influence on me on the whole. Ever since, I have been strongly opposed to this kind of evangelists."

(4) "There was several years ago, a purely emotional revival held in our town. Many of my associates were affected by this, but of course, *nearly without exception* they all back-slid. This was to me something very repugnant."

Probably the two things more worthy of note under the replies to this question are the small place doubt of Christianity plays with preparatory school students, and the dread they have of sanctimoniousness and solemnity.

Most Powerful External Influences in Conversion. There were 236 replies to Question 7. The influences named were as follows with the number of times each was mentioned :

A friend's talk with you, 103.
 Preaching, 96.
 Example of others, 86.
 Home influences, 37.
 Reading, 11.
 Sunday School, 10.
 Mother's prayers, 7.
 Prayer, 5.
 Bible study, 5.
 Y. M. C. A. meetings, a letter, lectures, study of philosophy, prayer-meetings, singing with young people, etc., etc., 31.

The prominence of personal work is too evident to require comment. Under the example of others, the parents are most often mentioned and particularly the mother. It is an interesting fact that while the influence, example, and training of the mother is mentioned many times, her talks are almost never mentioned as an influence in conversion. It is a "parent's influence," and a "friend's talk," which seems to influence. The often noticed restiveness which the youth shows under the admonition of his father or mother is not a sign that their power over him has gone or even weakened. It may be painful to them that he seems more inclined to bestow his confidences on a comparative stranger ; but it is questionable whether it is wise to try to interfere with this evident natural tendency.

Circumstances of Conversion. In reply to Question 8, asking

under what circumstances the Christian life was begun, there were 241 replies as follows :

In a revival, 121.
 Alone, 41.
 Don't know when, 38.
 In regular church service (including prayer-meeting, Sunday School, etc.), 19.
 While a friend was talking with you, 18.
 Special children's service, 2.
 Young People's Society convention, 1.
 Week of prayer, 1.

Severest Temptations of School Days. To Question 12, there were 232 replies, not counting 4 which were clearly evasive. Six said they had no temptations. The other answers may be arranged in the following tabular form, giving in the first column the number who named the sin as one of their strongest temptations, in the second column the number who yielded to it, in the third, the extent of yielding where this was mentioned:

	Strongest Temptat'n.	Yielded to.	Extent of Yielding. Slightly. Much.	
Masturbation,	132	131	57	69
Sexual Intercourse,	66	17	10	5
Laziness,	57	36	18	9
Lying,	44	32	19	6
Dishonesty,	33	24	18	6
Swearing,	32	22	10	10
Impure Thoughts,	15	12	3	3
Strong Drink,	10	8	7	2
Familiarity with a girl,	5	5		2
Tobacco,	4	3	1	2
Listening to and relating Impure Stories,	4	2		1
Ill Temper,	4	4	2	2
Procrastination,	3	2	1	1
Gambling,	2	2	3	
Doubt,	2	1	1	
Carelessness,	2	2		
Dancing,	2	2	1	1
Sexual passions,	2	1	1	
Fear of popular opinion,	2	1		
Selfishness,	2	2		
Miscellaneous,	20	20		

The following were each mentioned by one person only, and are placed under "miscellaneous" in the table: Pride, diffidence in Christian work, anger, thoughtless exaggeration, love for woman, sodomy, social dissipation, hatred of brother man, in the world out of Christ, insincerity, moral cowardice, lack of thoroughness, ambition to be a great man, breaking the Sabbath, exaggeration, neglect devotional duties, improper language, fun, desire for popularity, listing.

Almost everything mentioned by the students has been recorded, even though trivial, because it was thought interesting

and helpful to see what they looked upon as sin. The prominence of "laziness" is striking, and no doubt has some connection with the physical changes of this time of life. Teachers call many boys lazy, what is laziness? It probably refers to indisposition to study rather than to physical exercise. In view of the terrible strength and ravages of the sexual temptations, as recalled in these answers, one is led to wonder whether this indisposition to books is not a call to out-door exercise, and whether the failure to obey this demand of nature may not account in some measure for the distressing failure to control the sexual appetite.

There were 42 papers out of 232 in which there was no clear intimation that sexual temptations were experienced. Although the question was not directly asked, and in many other cases it was not clear, still there were 75 who were guilty of masturbation after their conversion, and 24 after they had decided to become ministers.

As much as one shrinks from it, one feels that it would be unfair to the few Christian workers who are now giving special attention to young men, and most of all to the thousands of youths who are now undergoing temptations which their elders do not appreciate, to fail to give at least a few of the almost heart-rending details which this question has brought out. The following are some of the replies :

- 1 (a) What was your severest temptation?
 "Lying, masturbation, sexual intercourse."
 (b) Did you yield?
 "Masturbation, sexual intercourse and lying."
 (c) To what extent?
 "Masturbation—O, my God! it liked to have ruined me for life. I yielded to lying to some extent, and also to sexual intercourse a few times."
- 2 (a) Severest temptation?
 "Masturbation."
 (b) Yielded?
 "Masturbation."
 (c) Extent?
 "Almost never, except by vile imaginings and terrible passion in the night-times. My belief is that there is no other avenue by which Satan so tempts and destroys boys."
- 3 (a) Severest temptation?
 "Masturbation, laziness."
 (b) Yielded?
 "Masturbation."
 (c) Extent?
 "Extensively for a short time; stopped when I learned its vital evil. Oh! that fathers would show their boys the danger in this!"
- 4 (a) Severest temptation?
 "Masturbation and sexual intercourse."
 (b) Yielded?
 "Both."
 (c) Extent?

"The former almost daily; the latter very seldom."

5 (a) Severest temptation?

"To be backward in Christian work, masturbation."

(b) Yielded?

"Both."

(c) Extent?

"The first, I thought that others could do the work better than I. The second, at periods, I practiced nearly every night during my academic course."

6 (a) Severest temptation?

"Laziness, or rather procrastination, and masturbation."

(b) Yielded?

"Both; but masturbation was the stronger, yet the two were largely combined."

(c) Extent?

"Masturbation irregular. Periods of abstinence followed by excess. Conscience said it was wrong, but had no definite information why wrong. Began when about ten or eleven, then ceased with very occasional participation till sixteen. Then continuous till gained definite knowledge about three years later. That with prayer broke the chain of bondage, but now constant prayer and watchfulness is needful."

7 (a) Severest temptation?

"Dishonesty and masturbation."

(b) Yielded?

"Masturbation. Oh, that God would blot this out forever!"

(c) Extent?

"To the extent of sin. Not often, but too often. I would if possible, blot this out of my life, yet I had not been told anything whatever about it in warning. Learned it from jokes and inclination."

8 (a) Severest temptation?

"Laziness and masturbation."

(b) Yielded?

"Masturbation."

(c) Extent?

"Until it was wrecking my life."

9 (a) Severest temptation?

"Swearing and masturbation."

(b) Yielded?

"Both."

(c) Extent?

"Extended over a number of years, ranging from period of several days to several months, (that is, the yielding the latter; as to the former, never, unless I was very angry)."

10 (a) Severest temptation?

"Lying, masturbation."

(b) Yielded?

"Masturbation."

(c) Extent?

"That I was weakened in mental power and vigor. May I say that Sunday is the day when the devil does his best work along the line of masturbation. Fellows get together, tell stories which awaken these passions, and then the temptation is too strong."

11 (a) Severest temptation?

"Laziness, masturbation, sexual intercourse."

(b) Yielded?

"Masturbation and I was lazy sometimes."

(c) Extent?

"Sometimes I would masturbate as many as six times in two weeks."

The most was eight times in two weeks. Then I would go for a while without it."

12 (a) Severest temptation?

"Masturbation, lying."

(b) Yielded?

"Both."

(c) Extent?

"Came near ruining my health by the former."

13 (a) Severest temptation?

"Sexual intercourse."

(b) Yielded?

"None, if it were not dishonesty to some extent."

(c) Extent?

"Deception of teacher and parent."

14 (a) Severest temptation?

"Masturbation and sexual intercourse."

(b) Yielded?

"Masturbation. Thank God, I had no very favorable opportunity for the others!"

(c) Extent?

"I was guilty of self-abuse as often as once a day regularly for about nine months."

15 (a) Severest temptation?

"Unbelief, masturbation."

(b) Yielded?

"Masturbation, through ignorance."

(c) Extent?

"For the same reason that I yielded, I cannot tell to what extent."

16 (a) Severest temptation?

"Swearing and masturbation, and sexual intercourse."

(b) Yielded?

"Swearing and masturbation."

(c) Extent?

"Swore frequently, and practiced masturbation from one to two times a week."

17 (a) Severest temptation?

"Masturbation."

(b) Yielded?

"Masturbation."

(c) Extent?

"Two years, until instinct taught me what my elders were to modest to tell."

18 (a) Severest temptation?

"Masturbation and sexual intercourse."

(b) Yielded?

"Masturbation."

(c) Extent?

"Practiced it to some extent for four years."

19 (a) Severest temptation?

"Masturbation."

(b) Yielded?

"The same. Formed the habit before being converted, and had a hard time in the fight."

(c) Extent?

"I formed it to such an extent that I would unconsciously do it in my sleep. I do n't mean nightly emission, but the act itself (was my worst enemy)."

20 (a) Severest temptation?

"Masturbation, sexual intercourse."

(b) Yielded?

"Masturbation."

(c) Extent?

"A very few times since conversion."

21 (a) Severest temptation?

"I cannot say *yes* to any of these."

22 (a) Severest temptation?

"Masturbation, sexual intercourse."

(b) Yielded?

"To the two underlined. I dare not now write them. I hate the very thought of them. May God forgive."

(c) Extent?

"The first frequently, the second once."

23 (a) Severest temptation?

"Laziness, masturbation, sexual intercourse."

(b) Yielded?

"Laziness and masturbation."

(c) Extent?

"To laziness, *so little* that I kept up well in my class-work. Masturbation has been my most terrible foe. At times, I thought I had it conquered, but it would conquer me again. I have never ceased to fight it, and now by God's grace, I think it is conquered."

24 (a) Severest temptation?

"Masturbation."

(b) "Same."

(c) Extent?

"Only when Satan swept me clear off my feet, possibly at intervals of six weeks."

25 (a) Severest temptation?

"Swearing and masturbation."

(b) Yielded?

"Both."

(c) Extent?

"Moderately for two or three years."

26 (a) Severest temptation?

"Masturbation, laziness, and lying."

(b) Yielded?

"All, to some extent."

(c) Extent?

"Masturbation was continued through my whole high school course, and about a year previous. Excessive indulgence."

27 (a) Severest temptation?

"Dishonesty and masturbation."

(b) Yielded?

"To these two more than any other."

(c) Extent?

"To the latter to an alarming extent, but my attention was called to the evils of masturbation by some patent medicine advertisement."

In reading these replies, one cannot fail to be impressed with:

(1) The alarming extent to which some students practice masturbation.

(2) The morbid state of mind thus occasioned.

(3) The uniformity with which they blame their elders for not having warned them.

(4) The strong hold with which the habit keeps them.

It is possibly true in certain cases that the evil physical results are overestimated by these young men, but when one is brought to *think* that his mind is gone, he is not far from in as bad fix as the man whose mind is gone.

Is not the state of affairs thus revealed serious enough to demand the earnest consideration of the three classes most directly interested and most directly responsible for these young men, viz.: their parents, their teachers, and the leaders of the Young Men's Christian Associations? It is not the purpose of this paper to indicate methods by which the needed work is to be accomplished. These facts show that there is a lamentable lack in the methods now pursued. Parents must not longer rest satisfied with having their sons taught the most delicate and one of the most sacred truths of life at the school, in the livery stable; preparatory and high school teachers have not done their duty to their students when they have given a few hours drill in Latin or Mathematics, when there is a subtle influence which is undermining the mental and moral nature of these same students of which the teachers are unmindful; and the College Young Men's Christian Association cannot satisfy itself with weekly meetings however enthusiastic and largely attended, and statistics of membership, however encouraging, so long as the Association fails to grapple more earnestly with the problem here presented.

To the question in regard to doubts there were 238 replies, 93 of whom had had periods of doubt, and 145 of whom had not. It should be borne in mind that the replies to this question cover the experiences of university, college, and preparatory school days.

The time of doubt is roughly as follows:

13-15 yrs.	8	23-25 yrs.	11
16-19 "	19	26-39 "	1
20-22 "	15		

I say "roughly" because periods were of different lengths, such as 17-20, 13-8, 14-15. The time was marked in some cases by such expressions as the following: "When I first studied evolution;" "junior and senior year in college;" "seasons of trial and application;" "times of despondency;" "when my life was not pure;" "after an emotional revival;" "before conversion;" "always had such seasons."

Some of the periods were characterized by occasional seasons of doubt lasting from momentary flashes to months, while in other cases, the whole period was one of doubt. The length of time the seasons lasted is revealed by answers to question (5) which are as follows:

Short intervals (some as short as five minutes) 33.

Six months, 3.
 Short time, but continuous, 16.
 About one year, 10.
 About two years, 4.
 From three to five years, 6.
 Eight years, 1.

A great variety of causes for doubt were given. They may be classified as follows :

Ignorance of or neglect to study the Bible, 10.
 Neglect of prayer, 8.
 Study of philosophy, psychology, botany, geology, comparative religions, 12.
 Inconsistent living of Christians, 10.
 Sin (on part of the doubter), 11.
 Supposing certain theological or denominational dogma integral parts of the gospel, with which it must stand or fall, 2.
 Mental growth or development, 11.
 Contact with unbelievers, 14.
 Seeing seeming contradictions in the Bible, or otherwise misunderstanding it, 9.
 Trying to understand things too deep for me, 2.
 Unanswered prayers, or other inexplicable personal experiences, 3.
 Lack of Christian work or responsibility, 4.
 Natural doubting nature or enquiring mind, 4.
 Influence destructive critics of Bible, 2
 First contact with higher criticism, 1.
 Reading skeptical books, 4.
 Ignorance of evidence of Christianity, 3.
 Social inequalities of our time, 3.

Or dividing into more comprehensive classes :

Natural growth of mind in contact with new subject and new conditions, 28.
 Neglect of Christian duties and positive sin, 36.
 Influence of skeptics or skeptical books, 20.
 Failure of professed Christians to manifest Christianity, 13.
 Misunderstanding Christianity and perplexing experiences, 14.

The helps for ending doubt which were given may be classified as follows :

Bible study, 13.
 Prayer, 12.
 Christian work, 11.
 Association with and example of godly people, 13.
 Listening to sermons and lectures, 5.
 Reading works on Christian Evidences and other books, 8.
 Memory of own Christian experience, 4.
 Having difficulties explained, 4.
 Thinking things out, observation, 8.
 Study of science, 3.
 Getting right with God, 3.

A careful study of these replies convinces one that doubt is not one of the most serious problems among college students in America, and that higher criticism is not "slaying its thousands, and German rationalism its tens of thousands."

Some helpful suggestions come to one as to how best to deal with doubt from a study of the replies to the questions on the cause and cure of doubts :

1. The doubt arising from mental development is normal, and in every way healthful and helpful. It is but the readjustment of belief when one begins to think, and should result in stronger faith. The young man needs to be kept in association with Christian people whose life will prove to him the truth of Christianity. He should be urged to keep up his private devotions, guard the purity of his life, read good books, and allowed to doubt to his heart's content.

2. The proper treatment of the large class who disbelieve Christianity because they disobey its truth is not to give them further evidences of the truth of Christianity, but to call upon them to live the truth they know. This same treatment will also be the best for the inconsistent Christians who are a stumbling block to others. It is doubtful, in fact, whether it is often the best to deal with doubt in our American institutions directly.

3. It is unwise to let young men at this period of readjustment come under skeptical influence either through books, professors, or fellow-students, where this can be avoided.

4. Careful explanations of some of the more difficult Christian doctrines, the more prominent difficulties in the Bible, and a statement of the fundamentals of Christian truth, would save many from periods of doubt.

5. Above all let the necessity for prayer, personal Bible study, and right living be insisted upon.