

The Evolution Of The City Mission.

Present Branch of United Workers Organization is the Fifth Stage of the Efforts to Deal with Hard Problem

Some records and note books of the earlier days of Norwich philanthropy, having recently come into the hands of the city missionary, Rev. C. A. Northrop, who conceived the plan of tracing briefly, for the present generation, the growth of the charitable spirit as organized, and set forth this short sketch by way of information and suggestion:

The City Missionary Society.

In the summer of 1865 certain benevolent gentlemen of the two Congregational churches, then existing in Norwich (the Second and Broadway), desiring "to devise some better means for the bestowal of their charities," and also "to establish the regular work of God in such localities as were destitute of the means of grace," procured the appointment of a joint committee of which grew the engagement of the Rev. Samuel Hopley of Windham, Ct., as city missionary and the formal organization, one year later, of the Norwich City Missionary Society.

The members of the committee through whom the appointment was made were: Dr. C. B. Webster, Ebenezer Leavitt, and Deacon Dan Huntington of the Second church, and Deacon Lewis Edwards, Deacon J. Leavitt and Amos W. Prentice of Broadway church.

Mr. Hopley began his services in February, 1866, at a salary of \$1,400, afterwards raised to \$1,500, per year. The officers of the society were: President, Dr. C. B. Webster; secretary and treasurer, S. B. Bishop; executive committee, Dan Huntington, Ebenezer Leavitt, Gustav A. Jones, Jr., and William A. Alken.

Mr. Hopley's first annual report is in print, from which it appears that food and clothing had been bestowed upon many deserving families; that religious services had been held on the wharf, and at both the mission chapel, the Mt. Pleasant and the (Old Providence), later Bowwell avenue chapel, with services on Sundays and week days, that services had been held at the jail resulting in some pledges and some conversions; that there was much distribution of books and tracts to the prisoners, and some Bible visitation among the people, and that more than \$1,000 was received for distribution, aside from the missionary's salary.

The receipts for 1870 were: From the Second church, \$1,045.85; from Broadway church, \$1,081; from other friends, \$521.59. The deep interest taken by the men of Norwich in such work is evidenced by the size of the contributions. There was one gift of \$200, eight of \$100, fifteen of \$50, one of \$40, seven of \$25, and so on. These were individual and church and Thanksgiving and festival receipts. The individual contributions were all from men, except two. After the election of 1870 the society seems to have suffered a relapse. It disappears so far as the records go, and after three years rises again under the name of the Provident association.

The Provident Association.

This organization came into being December 8, 1873, at a meeting where nine out of eleven invited churches were represented. It grew out of the disturbed financial conditions of that time, and its object was "the relief of the poor and the suppression of street huggers." Its first officers were: President, J. Lloyd Greene; secretary, Charles H. Dillaby; treasurer, E. B. Huntington; directors, S. B. Bishop, M. H. Sisson, U. S. Gardner.

From extant notes on its beginnings, it appears that it sought "to extend temporary help in time of necessity, relief in sickness and suffering, and assistance to those who would endeavor to help themselves." It made provisions for visitors and districts and general agent (corresponding to city missionary). It had valuable suggestions to make to its visitors, showing that the men of that generation were almost, or quite, as wise as we are. It asked that the people be visited as far as possible, the needy reported, and not encouraged to look to the association for entire support, that the ability of the men be increased into that people old and young be gotten into church and Sunday school, that confidence be not betrayed, that sympathy be not allowed to overpower judgment. The membership was made up of those who contributed one or more dollars to its treasury. I have seen a list of the first members, numbering 94, whose aggregate contributions were \$361, including two of \$50 each, two of \$15 and \$10, sixteen of \$5-10.

This association had a history of more than five years. Its first agent was S. B. Bishop, followed after a year by H. E. Griswold. Its money was raised largely through public entertainments. There was the Continental Tea Party in December, '73, with J. P. Collins and Charles E. Dyer for soliciting committee, which sold over 1,800 tickets and netted nearly \$1,200, and a Carnival the next year, the cleaning up after which gave Agent Griswold his initiation into the new agency.

In the continental year the association published The Aloo Blossom: A Magazine devoted to the interests of antiquity and the Provident Association. With an Annex giving Full and Descriptive Catalogue of the Articles Exhibited in the Centennial Loan Collection—and received its reward, in workable funds.

The proceeds of an entertainment in White's hall in January, '78, by a party of young people, netted the association \$40. It co-operated with the recently organized United Workers in the fall of '78 in procuring and sending out throughout the city bags, suitably inscribed, with the names of the Providence Association, The Sheltering Arms and the Children's Home, for the reception of gifts of all kinds for these public uses. The share of the association was "some forty-seven bags filled with sugar, tea, coffee, potatoes, apples, soap, meat, poultry and other supplies, and eight large bundles of clothing, some of which was entirely new, from our dry goods dealers, and fifteen dollars in cash besides." And there must be many who remember that great Benefit Concert by Powers' Jubilee Singers, given in Broad hall early in 1879 by "the colored sons and daughters of the south, former slaves, and now residents in this city."

From the note books of Agents Bishop and Griswold it is seen that the early headquarters were 107 Main street in Mr. Bishop's day, and that Mr. Griswold's office was, first "over Mr. Safford's News Office" and then removed to room in the City hall. The city and town were divided into districts, in which there were 24 visitors who were provided with suitable cards upon which they wrote the names and needs of families to be helped, and then passed these cards over to the agent for action.

The men's quarters were regarded in some quarters as hard-hearted and almost repulsive. There is a letter written to Mr. Bishop by a woman, asking "Do you expect to go to heaven, treating a poor widow so?" and it can be gleaned from Mr. Griswold's notes how low he stood in the estimation of some whom he was trying to help, because of his persistent refusal to pauperize them. It was he who introduced a form of grocery order (suggested by Mrs. Johnson) which is substantially the one now in use in the selectmen's office for the outside poor.

In 1878 the income of the association fell, and partly to the rise of the United Workers and the feeling that the benevolent work of the city might be advantageously centralized. At the last annual meeting in November, 1878, the question of dissolution was negatived, Agent Griswold was re-appointed, and special efforts were made to collect subscriptions. The headquarters were transferred to the City hall, and closer relations were established with the United Workers and the selectmen.

Each of these new organizations grew out of national and local stirrings of the public mind on the subject of temperance. The town went non-license in 1878, and the year 1877 marks the coming to Norwich of the Rev. Hugh Montgomery, and the United Workers. The United Workers' organization was the expansion of the work of the Woman's Christian Temperance union, which had been organized a year or two before, and whose first president was Mrs. Dr. Charles Jewett. It included a committee of jail and almshouse, and sewing school and other benevolent work, which had been carried on for some years previously by the City and City committees of ladies. Outdoor relief work was prosecuted at first in connection with the Providence association, and when that association ceased its labors, the outdoor relief committee of the United Workers came into being—appointed, at first to take charge of the outdoor relief work in 1880, and afterwards to prosecute that branch of the work more effectively through the work of Mrs. Mary E. Lester, when she was first employed for a time to visit all families receiving aid.

In 1884 the outdoor relief committee was enlarged, renamed the outdoor relief and City Mission committee, and Mrs. Lester was made its secretary, the understanding being that the City Mission, organized in 1881, should render financial assistance through its own treasury.

Rev. Hugh Montgomery came to Norwich in 1877 as the pastor of the (then) Central M. E. church, and was an earnest, indefatigable, fiery temperance worker, and became, after his pastorate, prosecuting attorney for New London county, and did much benevolent work growing out of his knowledge of the effects of drink upon certain families.

At a meeting of citizens, called December 7, 1881, to consider the question of some more efficient organization, a committee was appointed to prepare a paper stating the object for which this meeting had been called, and soliciting subscriptions in furtherance of the plans proposed. The committee consisted of W. A. King, E. H. Beckwith, Moses Pierce, C. J. King, and Costello Lippitt. W. P. Greene and E. H. Beckwith were appointed solicitors and collectors, and E. H. Gibbs was made treasurer. It was voted "that the services of Rev. Hugh Montgomery be engaged as City Missionary in connection with his present duties as prosecuting attorney at a salary of two thousand dollars (\$2,000) per annum, payable monthly from January 1, 1882."

The pastors of the city having co-operated, in a meeting called for the purpose, and the subscription lists with names of subscribers and the amounts subscribed, being presented at a later meeting, formal organization was effected, December 30, 1881, and the name was The Norwich City Mission.

Its object, as stated in its constitution, was "the prevention of intemperance and crime, the restoration to an upright and useful life of those who have suffered from the effects thereof, the showing of Christian evidence of desire for such restoration, and such kindred offices of Christian kindness as circumstances may require."

Its first officers were: President, J. P. Barstow; secretary, Lewis A. Hyde; treasurer, E. N. Gibbs; agents, Hugh Montgomery, Mr. Montgomery served the Mission as agent or city missionary for four years, during which time his vigorous work was quarterly and annual reports showed how varied and useful were his labors in connection with the Reform club, the local pulpits, the distributing of food and clothing, the visiting of families, the handling of the wages of men pledged to reform, the securing of work for those seeking it. In Mr. Montgomery's fourth annual and last report, he called attention to

the four years' work of the mission, with its total receipts during those years of \$2,100 from liquor prosecutions, and of \$1,500 from individuals, which had been expended for the benefit of the poor.

Failing health led to his resignation as city missionary, which was accepted with suitable resolutions, regrets being tempered by the thought that he would still remain in the city and act as prosecuting agent.

There was some thought of discontinuing the mission after this resignation, and the transferee of its work to the United Workers and the Young Men's Christian association, but it seemed best to continue the organization, and Mrs. Mary E. Lester, who had done excellent service as secretary of the outdoor relief and City Mission committee of the United Workers, was appointed city missionary for the next year (1885) at a salary of \$500, and Gustave Bachstrom was made her assistant at a salary of \$325. These appointments foreshadowed changes that were soon to come. The opening of the next year witnessed an adjustment whereby the Norwich City Mission became, by vote, the City Mission branch of the United Workers, and thus began the next stage of evolution.

The City Mission Branch of the United Workers.

In January, 1887, the City Mission voted "to continue this organization as the City Mission branch of the United Workers, and that we undertake to raise as nearly as possible \$2,000 for the current year." The minutes of the same meeting make their first mention of George W. Swan, who, as chairman of the jail committee of the United Workers, had done excellent work during the past year similar to that done by Mr. Montgomery.

The minutes of the next annual meeting record that arrangements were in progress to retain the services of Mr. Swan in the jail work, provided he could be considered as in the employ of the United Workers and responsible to them in case the money for his support was raised independently of the amount regularly contributed for the United Workers; the object being to assist Mrs. Lester and work in conjunction with and as auxiliary to her labors, especially in the matter of furnishing employment for heads of families.

The next year (1889) it was voted "that George W. Swan be employed by the City Mission as their agent in connection with Mrs. Lester at a salary of \$1,000 for the year commencing January 1, 1890. It was also voted that the officers of the mission be an advisory committee to confer with the United Workers when requested."

In 1890, owing to Mrs. Lester's ill health, Miss Clara Stanton was made her assistant, and later in the year, in the enforced absence of Mrs. Lester, Miss Carrie Gordon, secretary of the outdoor relief committee of the United Workers, was placed in charge of the work. At the close of the year, Mrs. Lester having died, the City Mission branch voted "that the United Workers be requested to appoint George W. Swan as city missionary and Miss Clara Stanton as assistant missionary, it being understood that their support would be assured" by the sum of \$2,500 was named to be raised.

In 1892 the question of continuing the City Mission branch came up, and it was thought that by the assumption of the entire charge and responsibility by the United Workers, greater simplicity of operation and more effective results would be obtained. No action was taken and the city Missionaries Swan and Stanton were re-appointed.

In 1893 Miss Nannie B. Ward was made assistant missionary, vice Miss Stanton resigned. About these days the death of many of the larger subscribers, and the difficulty of securing a collector, led to the making of a public appeal for voluntary subscriptions to the extent of \$2,000.

In 1894 Swan and Ward were re-appointed, and James Greenwood was

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250th Anniversary OF NORWICH, JULY 5th & 6th

Men's High Grade Clothing AT ANNIVERSARY SALE PRICES

Just think of it—now in the height of the season we offer our entire stock of Men's High Grade Suits at greatly reduced prices during our Anniversary Sale. Cool, comfortable Suits for warm weather—Blue Serges, Grey Flannels, Worsteds and Serges.

- \$15. Suits now \$ 9.50
- \$20. Suits now \$15.
- \$18. Suits now \$12.50
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STRAW HATS--All Styles AT ANNIVERSARY SALE PRICES

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- \$2.00 Straw Hats now \$1.65
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Splendid showing of Boys' Suits for Graduation attractively priced during our Anniversary Sale.

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We're ready for you with a Suit that fits—\$12. to \$25.

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Discount Sale of the world renowned STEIN-BLOCH CLOTHING

is attracting widespread attention, and

NO WONDER

when you can buy the best Clothing made and save

20 Cents

on each dollar invested as follows:

- \$10.00 SUITS now \$ 8.00
- \$12.00 SUITS now \$ 9.60
- \$15.00 SUITS now \$12.00
- \$18.00 SUITS now \$14.40
- \$20.00 SUITS now \$16.00
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Don't delay taking advantage of this exceptional opportunity, and at same time fit yourself for the hot weather with one of our

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Our stock is the largest to be found in this section and you are sure to find a Straw Hat to please you. Prices 95c to \$5.00.

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Clothier, Hatter and Furnisher,

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CRITIC'S USE IN THE WORLD.

Fault-Finding Healthful if One Makes Up His Mind to Abide by It.

Did you ever stop to consider how important is the critic? If it were not for this person of opinions, then every one would jog along in the same old rut from year to year, make the same faults eternally and never get ahead. True criticism is the peach stick that makes the youngster sit up and behave, the lash that makes the older man shrug his shoulder and tug harder at his burden, and yet we all have a wholesome contempt for the glittered criticism until, like the bad dose of medicine, it has telling effects and we are really recovering from a bad malady. When you get real earnest and want to know more and more, you will take the medicine and lick the spoon, but if you think you have no need of it you will be just as obstinate and mean as the ash cart mule in the alley and you will never go any way but backward. Honest criticism over the beautiful work of one's heart is not pleasant, in fact, it is pathetic in a sense, but it is so helpful that a person should be willing to abide by it. If we were never criticised about the singing, painting, writing or other talents in which we hope to succeed, then there would always be a sameness about everything, but, once the spur is felt, it means making a change, and, what is more, usually for the better.—Houston Post.

CASTORIA

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Rich or poor or proud and handsome, Even you can read this Chances, By no law of luck or chance, Every tooth you save enhances, All your smiles and conversation, Renders joy to all relations, Don't despair when teeth are aching, Save them, all their shapes remaking, Life's prolonged and health extended, Every time a tooth is mended, You will find your joy remedied, Dentist I "my crown" reveals it, Every art by art conceals it, Nature gave all in good season, Teeth to eat with, minds to reason, Is it her fault, yours or mine, Shall their loss be mine or thine, Thou shalt know in all good time.

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The Kayser Patent Finger-Tipped Silk Gloves

Kaysers are the final result of 25 years of experience. The pure silk fabric is made in our factory, to get a weave that wears. Every glove goes through fifty operations to attain perfection in finish and fit. To get these gloves—the kind you want—look for "Kayser" in the hem.

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