

[ Constructive Activities of the Young Men's Christian Associations of China, 1925. (Dec. 01, 1925). Annual and Quarterly Reports of the YMCAs of China, Korea, and Hong Kong, 1902-1904, Box 18, Folder 4. Univ. of Minnesota, Kautz Family YMCA Archives. Source: <http://purl.umn.edu/240795> ]



# CONSTRUCTIVE ACTIVITIES

OF THE

YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF CHINA

1925

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# A Bird's Eye View of the Young Men's Christian Association

## WORK IN CHINA

(From the Last Annual Report)

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|         |  |                |   |
|---------|--|----------------|---|
| 44,550  | Members                                | 26,878         | In free Schools for Illiterates                               |
| 42      | City and                               | 248,785        | Total Attendance at Special Lectures                          |
| 201     | Student Associations                   | 132,420        | Total Attendance at Reading Rooms                             |
| 813     | Chinese and                            |                |   |
| 75      | Foreign Secretaries                    | 226,414        | Total Attendance at Gymnasiums                                |
| 22,689  | In Bible Classes                       | 8,099          | Participated in Excursions                                    |
| 3,281   | Decisions for the Christian life with  | 137,377        | Game Room Attendance  |
| 709     | Joining the Church                     | 239,744        | At Socials (Total Attendance)                                 |
| 379,948 | Total Attendance at religious Meetings | 856,665        | Attended Cinema Shows   |
| 480     | Paid Teachers                          | \$1,042,321.42 | Total Year's Expenditure to carry on work, national and local |
| 4,863   | In Day Schools,                        |                |   |
| 6,625   | In Night Schools,                      | \$3,315,942.00 | Total value of property, local and national                   |
| 2,985   | In Special Types of Schools            |                |   |



## Significant Resolutions of National Gathering of Y. M. C. A.

### General Secretaries on the Present Situation In China.

(Coming closely upon the heels of May 30th. incident, the following translation of original resolutions adopted in Chinese August 8, 1925, are of real significance. This conference was held in the buildings of Shanghai Baptist College and lasted two weeks. It was attended by 45 Chinese and 40 foreign secretaries of China. The foreign secretaries included Americans and Danish and British subjects.)

### General Statement of the Conference on the Policy of the Young Men's Christian Association.

**A Chinese** From its beginnings thirty years ago the Chinese  
**Christian** Young Men's Christian Association has been a self-  
**Movement** propagating, self-supporting, self-governing body



Gathering of General Secretaries, Shanghai, August 1925

#### **Called Upon to do its Duty.**

under the control of no foreign or Chinese individual or institution. Its nature is completely a Chinese, a Christian, a Youth and a Lay movement; its object is to help and guide the young men and boys of the nation towards a well rounded character. In recent years China has suffered from disturbances, strifes and difficulties from without and from within, while at the same time there has grown up a tidal torrent of new ideas and thoughts. The Young Men's Christian Association placed in the midst of this critical situation, feels deeply a sense of increased responsibility and desires to reaffirm its aim and to adapt its program to more fully meet the needs of the hundred million young men and boys of China. It has a duty which cannot be shirked to give leadership and co-operation to both the student and laboring classes'



**Causes of Present Difficulties should be investigated and public opinion created making possible international friendship.**

The Young Men's Christian Association has stood for the ideals of international friendship, equality of races and world harmony. We believe that policies of aggression of any sort, whether political, economic or cultural, are contrary to the spirit of Christ and are great hindrances to the progress of world friendship. The unequal treaties negotiated during the last hundred years between China and the foreign nations have made for much ill-feeling between East and West and are the underlying causes of many years of conflict and of the recent incidents in Shanghai, Hankow, Canton and other places. We should conduct a thorough going study and investigation of these difficulties, create a proper public opinion regarding them and promote good relationships among the nations to prevent future wars and realize the highest ideals we have cherished.

**China must be aroused to deal with her internal problems as well as her place among the nations.**

During the last decade of the Republic civil strife has gone on without ceasing, the living of the people daily lowered, customs daily debased, and men's hearts daily discouraged. The task of the Young Men's Christian Association from this time forth should be to increasingly center on the spreading of Christ's exalted character and his spirit of love and sacrifice, coupled with the great teachings of our own sages. We should moreover put forth every effort in promoting campaigns against opium, and for family reform, increasing popular education and the training of good citizens, in order to awaken the moral feelings of the people and to stimulate thoroughness of thought and a spirit of co-operation. Especially should every effort be put forth to obtain national unity, to remove

the obstacles due to base selfishness, to arouse the conscience, to help all to pull together to save the situation, earnest in constructive policies, meeting every crisis, restoring the nation and raising the Chinese people to a position of partnership in the family of nations.

**To follow Christ in not only individual but national life is the only way out of the present crisis.**

We as a group of fellow workers have met together in Shanghai for a number of days. In considering the importance of the situation and the program of our Association we have had full appreciation of the new thought arising up in China. We are convinced that the Young Men's Christian Association has its distinctive contribution to make. We have gone fully into discussion and investigation of plans with thought, meditation and prayer and have a newer and more real discovery of God and a greater faith. We fully feel that the teachings of Jesus Christ give a broad and full philosophy of life, are in harmony with and magnify the best of the culture of our fathers and at the same time contain and complete the new thought of the times. We further know that the central teachings of the Christian life are not an empty frame, are not theory, but are sufficient to meet not only the needs of the individual life but also that of the races and the nations.

In the present situation we feel both an unprecedented demand upon us and an unprecedented hope on our part in the successful passing of the crisis. We wish to express our determination to put forth our best effort to be faithful in completing the heaven-given responsibility upon our Association.





Some of the 4800 "illiterates" graduating in a single year in Hankow Y. M. C. A. schools in the Thousand Character Course.

It has been conceded that the greatest handicap to the progress of the Chinese nation has been the illiteracy of the vast majority of her people. The vastness of the population numbering perhaps four hundred million people has led various reformers to introduce some "short-cut" method in order that the common people might be enabled to learn to read and write. Such devices as Romanization, phonetic script, etc., have been tried during recent years, but all proved to be a failure.

Four years ago the Y. M. C. A. set out to tackle the problem. The method worked out was a selected vocabulary of one thousand characters, the most frequently used in the Chinese language, upon

## ASSOCIATION LEADS FIGHT AGAINST ILLITERACY

which a course called the "Foundation Characters" consisting of four books, was prepared. This course aims at enabling the illiterate to acquire a maximum vocabulary within a minimum time and at a minimum cost. It was really the tool with which to work.

Having worked out the tool, the next logical thing was to think out some device by which the tool could be tested out as to its workability. This was finally done in the form of city-wide campaigns. Four cities, Changsha, Chefoo, Kashing and Hangehow, were then chosen for the purpose. The results of those campaigns were so successful that they attracted nation-wide attention. As the result, similar campaigns were started, one after another, in different places all over the country, so up to this time our local Associations alone had campaigns in such places as Soochow, Ningpo, Nanking, Tsinan, Harbin, Kirin, Antung, Chengtu, Canton, Soochow, Moukden, Tientsin, Nanchang. Within the past year an experiment was carried



50,000 "Thousand Character" Books Ready for shipment to the Manchurian army at Moukden.



out in Hankow where 78% of over 3,600 illiterates enrolled for the first term were graduated, and like wise out of 2,500 enrolled for a second term in the same year another 2,000 certificates were given. This was only a typical case of work done by our local Associations.

One question of great importance in the whole work is "What is to be done with the graduates of the popular education schools?" Our work certainly does not stop with the graduation. For those who have finished the first course we still have books. Supplemental courses have already been prepared for the graduates of the one thousand character courses to enable the latter to return for further education in such elementary subjects as geography, history, arithmetic, letter-writing, hygiene and science. Even after that we still have books to follow them. In that way, the graduates of our schools will become fairly well educated in the course of two or

three years by gradually enlarging enlarging their vocabulary and thus accumulating knowledge.

Without the help and leadership of the National Committee this work in the local Associations would not have been possible. The men in charge of this work on the National Committee were first Mr. Y. C. James Yen and then Mr. Daniel C. Fu, both of whom were working among the Chinese laborers in France during the war where they got the inspiration for this work. Mr. Yen has accepted a call to the general secretaryship of a new organization called the Mass Education Movement with headquarters in Peking. While this latter organization is working upon the problem of illiteracy in China, the National Committee of the Y. M. C. A. still continues in the work which it had the honor of originating. Whenever possible, the two organizations work together very closely.

### Extracts from an address of Dr. Sun Yat-sen at the 25th. anniversary of the Y.M.C.A. in China

"The Young Men's Christian Association stands for the full development of the mind, body and spirit. It collects young men of ambition and cultivates and develops in them an all round character. This is thoroughly in conformity with the determined purpose of Jesus Christ. It is also based on such fundamentals as Confucius enunciated when he said, "you must first establish yourself before you try to establish others and you must first make your life a success before you expect the same from others."

"The aim of its religion is to bring civilization to this country and to the general public, education. It may be likened to Moses who emancipated the people of Israel from Egypt. However, when these masses of people had been liberated, they lived a miserable life on the desert for forty years until they were led by Joshua to a beautiful place called Canaan. The people of China have likewise set themselves free from the Manchu regime, but, I am sorry to say, that we are suffering from the tyranny of corruption as though they were under the oppression of deep water and hot fire. The people are waiting anxiously for a Joshua to lead them. I entertain high hopes that your Association will fulfill this expectation. Will you not, therefore, consecrate your lives and so act as Joshua did that the four hundred million of Chinese people can be delivered from fire and water and led out into the new land of Canaan? I earnestly hope that the Y. M. C. A. will rise to this great responsibility and not disappoint us".—



## Training for Citizenship

During the past year in China there have been many people in the country ready to stir up more trouble, but very few who have set themselves to the difficult task of getting the minds of the people centered upon constructive efforts for the good of the nation. In this latter group has been Dr. David Z. T. Yui, General Secretary of the National Y. M. C. A. movement and China's People's Delegate at the Washington Conference. The Association has in 30 cities conducted "Good Citizenship" Campaigns as described below which were under the immediate direction of one of Dr. Yui's Associates on the National "Y" staff, namely, Dr. Herman C. E. Liu of the Educational Department.

The very key note of this effort is the "turning of national shame into civic spirit" as Dr. Liu has put it, "and to get things done within the nation that are crying for solution rather than stirring up hatred against others", which after all is such a negative way of making progress.

The National Y. M. C. A. leaders very happily hit upon the idea of a "Good Citizenship Week", and are utilizing two holidays coming in the month of May for the purpose. May 4th. is the Anniversary of the Student Movement, and May 9th. "National Humiliation Day".

Statistics often make dry reading but when one realizes that in these thirty cities the Y was promoting all or some of the following in connection with this unique purpose within the first year of specially directed effort, the figures are very much worth while examining.

For instance 17 study circles on international or civic problems enrolled nearly 3,000 individuals; 241 lectures and forums were attended by over 70,000 people; 64 lecture teams with 295



Flag hoisting ceremony at Taiyuanfu. One of the outgrowths of the Y. M. C. A.'s Citizenship Training Movement.

members went out to promote lectures, play, story telling and singing; 3,660 contestants entered for the writing of essays on citizenship; 8 cities conducted oratorical contests on this subject and 5 others ran mock parliaments to visualize good government and had before their audiences; tests were worked out for "Good Citizens" and over 1,300 entered to have themselves measured; finally nearly 50,000 visited exhibitions where the special features were good citizenship charts, scrolls of proverbs on the subject, maps, flags, home products, historical documents and photographs of China's patriots.



One feature was most interesting. A "straw vote" was taken to "elect" China's "best citizens" and Sun Yat Sen and Wu Pei Fu came out easy victors with 4,650 voters casting their ballots.

Not the least important was the co-operation given the Y. M. C. A. by churches; government, private and Christian schools alike; Bureaus of Education and the National Association for the Advancement of Education; and local civic bodies and chambers of Commerce.

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**President Coolidge in an address on the work of the Y. M. C. A.  
at Washington, October 1925.**

"Special emphasis is being placed upon the need of training for citizenship. Not only by the general development of character, by encouraging industry and discouraging waste, are you strengthening the community and raising up leaders. By informing the young respecting the teachings of the New Testament you are providing them with a grasp on the principles which must underlie all enduring civilization. Through countless study circles and in open forums they are given opportunity to read and discuss the current economic, social, and political problems under the admonition that such training is not intended alone for personal betterment, but to prepare for a wiser discharge of public obligations. It is realized that every youth is a potential law maker, law interpreter, and law enforcer; that in the coming days their word, their action, and their franchise will inevitably exert some ruling influence over the lot of their fellowmen.....

*"The Association has adapted itself to the youth of all nationalities and races and become an indispensable factor in multitudes of great industrial establishments, ministering through the physical, intellectual, social and spiritual to the whole range of life of young men".*



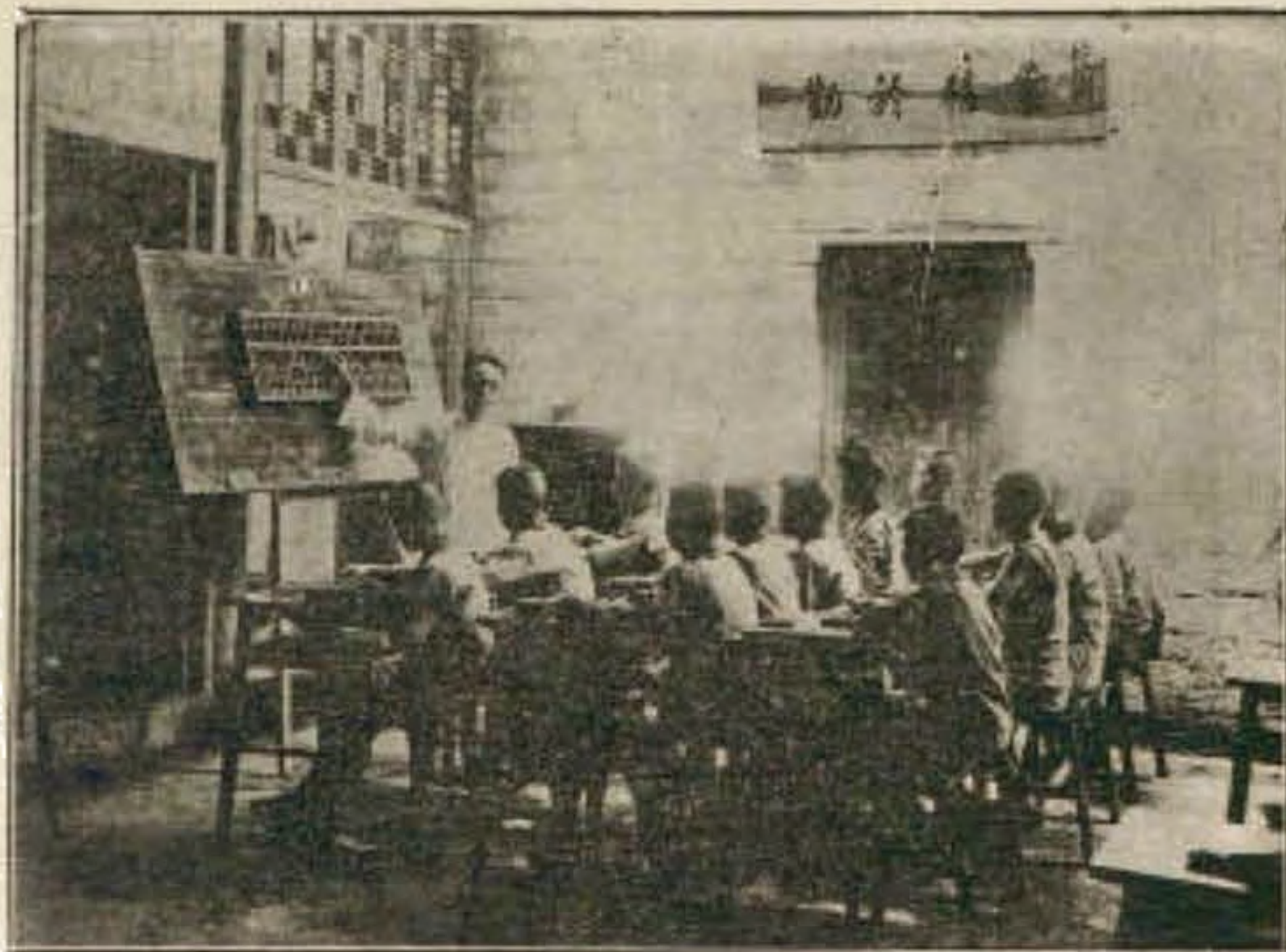
## SERVICE TO THE INDUSTRIAL CLASS

China has a working population of over 300,000,000 who have now begun to exert an influence in the reconstruction of the nation.

These working masses are subject to all kinds of modern influences. They have become conscious of their misery and of class distinctions. Strikes have become common in the larger industrial cities and evidences of labor unrest have become manifest in different parts of the country. The burning question of the hour is whether China can find a means to lead these masses on to the road of constructive reform and progress, or be confronted with a social revolution similar to that in Russia.

The Young Men's Christian Association has emphasized its service in industry and has exerted itself to serve the spiritual, intellectual, economic and social needs of the working masses. Up to the present Associations in fifteen of the leading cities of China have undertaken special programs for the industrial classes.

In order to help meet the manifold needs in industry, the Association, according to the findings of the Canton Convention, is undertaking a program emphasizing the following lines:



Working boys are taught trades in Nanchang Y. M. C. A.

1. A program to introduce the Christian principles of the sacredness of personality, the brotherhood of man, and service. It is hoped that this may be achieved through the establishment of a co-operative spirit and system in industry. In Tientsin a co-operative experiment which enables ricksha pullers to own their own





Rickshaw coolies' cooperative society of Tientsin Y. M. C. A.

vehicles has been conducted with success. In Shanghai a Consumers' Co-operative Society is in the process of organization.

2. A program to better the relationships between employers and employees in industry. Study groups are conducted with a view to creating better understanding between the two parties in industry. Reports from Cheloo, Hankow, Hangchow and other cities fully demonstrate the value of such groups.

3. A program aiming at the elevation of the standard of life of the working people. This program emphasizes seven aspects of service activities, viz., religious or moral training; the intellectual development of the working man and boy, including such features as popular education and vocational education; hygiene and physical development; the use of leisure and recreation; the betterment of workers' home life, including such features as housing betterment, child welfare, and family budgets; citizenship training to enable the working people to fulfill their duties as citizens of their own community and the states; and economic improvement including such features as co-operative buying, savings societies and insurance.

## WU TING FANG

"Ideal society must be built upon the foundations of Truth, Humanity, Peace, and Love.....

This in reality is the Kingdom of Heaven which is sponsored by the Young Men's Christian Association. Whenever I think of the Association, I cannot help having thoughts of deepest admiration."





Summer student conference held in Canton 1925.

The statement that "As go the students so goes the nation", may be a trite one, but it nevertheless represents a fact with which China must reckon. The Y. M. C. A. was actually first established at a school in Foochow forty years ago. Great emphasis has always been laid by it upon work among students. A recent paper published in Chinese upon this subject, literally translated, says: "The student movement which may be likened to heavy clouds and raging waves, is bound to have a tremendous effect upon our society and country. This fact puts before us a greater challenge and increases our responsibility".

The part which students are taking to-day in the political affairs of China is full of significance. Probably never before has a

## The Importance of Student Work of the Y.M.C.A. IN CHINA

nation facing a crisis seen such a demonstration of power come from a determined body of youth in school. It has been too generally concluded that this influence has been altogether destructive and provocative. While much that has been done and urged could only lead to conflict and chaos, there has at the same time been a group of Christian students which has worked actively and fearlessly to prevent outbreaks of violence. They are urging a constructive attack upon their difficult problems through the study of causes and remedies.

Mr. T. Z. Koo, speaking at the recent Institute of Pacific Relations held in Honolulu, made it abundantly clear that it is not against Christ that the non-Christian agitation is directed. "The East" he said, "is challenging the claim of Christendom to moral leadership. It understands and might accept the Christianity of Christ, but it denies that the Christianity of Christ is the Christianity of Christendom". Of all the consequences of the Great War in Europe the most far-reaching as concerns the Orient is this challenge to the moral leadership of the West. It is the difficult task of the Christians of the West to prove to the East that they too are conscious of their failure to follow the teachings of Christ. Into this situation the National Y.M.C.A. movement is injecting new life and leadership in the form of men capable of leading the thought of the students of China and is undertaking during these few years to meet this special emergency by emphasizing more than ever before the work in the student associations, not to impress upon the students their importance as individuals so as to lead them to undertake responsibilities beyond their powers, but to help them by guidance into serious discussion on international affairs, Christianity, science and religion, and to impart to them a larger faith in order that the proper view point might be attained together with vision and the requisite preparation for life.



## The Y. M. C. A. a World Wide Leader in Brotherhood

(By President Coolidge)

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"It would be difficult to find any leaders in the life of our present day who have not in one way or another come under the influence and the teaching of this Association. They speak not only from the pulpit but from the bench and the bar, from the pages of journalism and the halls of legislation, from industry and commerce and finance. These are all on a higher plane and exerting a more humanizing influence because of the results of this great work.....

Perhaps one of the most significant results that is flowing from all these activities is the unifying influence which they are producing. We do not all need to be alike, but it is usually more helpful and certainly more comfortable to put the most emphasis on those characteristics which we have in common rather than to dwell too much on divergences and dissimilarities. One leads to friendship and co-operation, while the other is likely to develop contention and animosity. Amid all the divergent influences that have been manifesting themselves among the different peoples of the earth in recent times, it is *exceedingly reassuring to realize that there is a quiet and constructive effort on the part of a world-wide brotherhood of Christian youth for co-ordination and harmony.*

*Extract from an address made in  
Washington D. C., October 1925.*





T. Z. Koo, Associate General Secretary National Y.M.C.A. of China and Secretary of the World's Student Christian Federation.

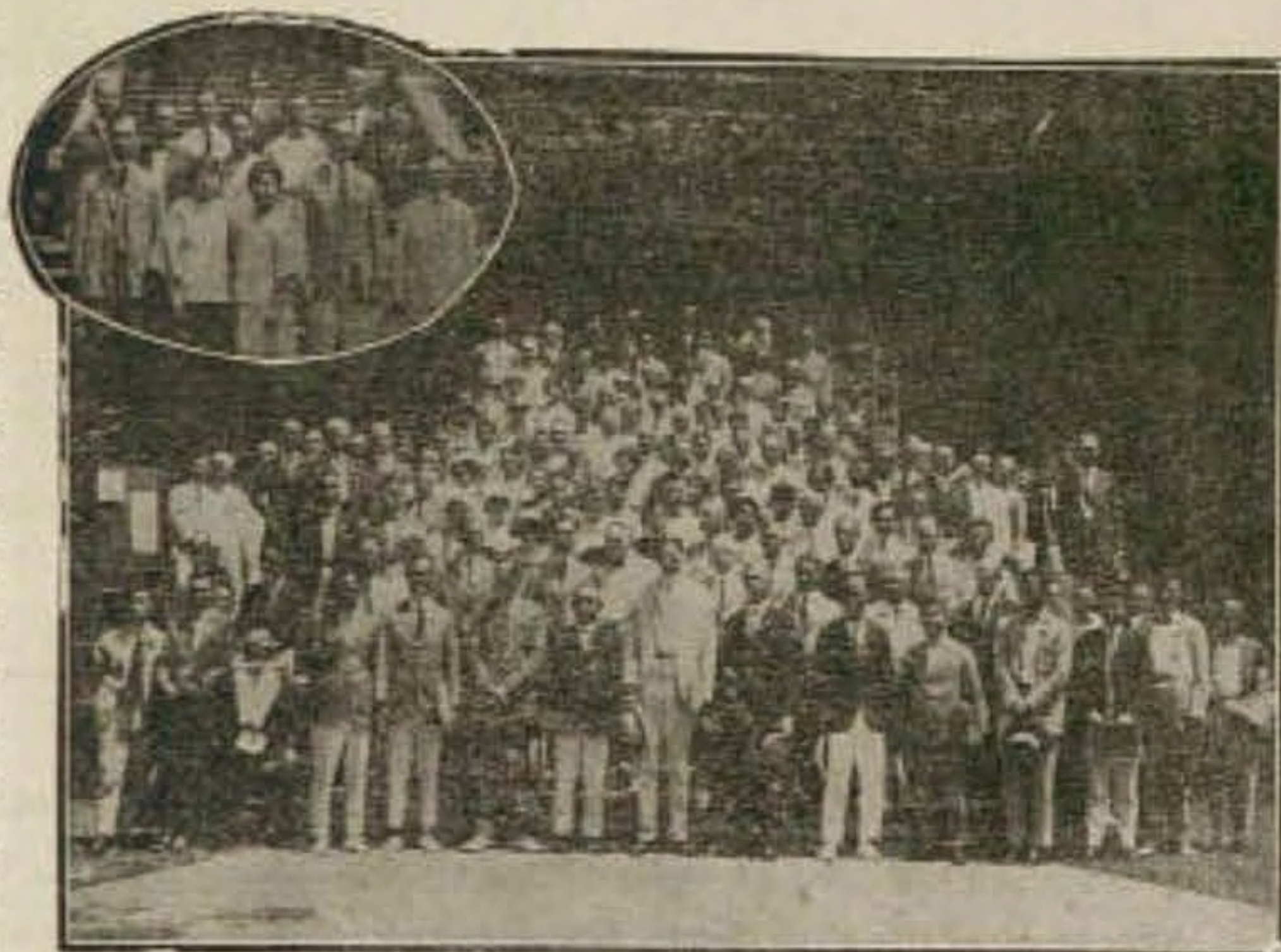
## THE Y.M.C.A. MOVEMENT OF CHINA AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

### T. Z. Koo & the Opium Conference

Two events of the past year have brought the Chinese Association movement into close touch with world affairs.

Mr. T. Z. Koo was a "Peoples' Representative" of China at the Geneva Opium Conference and his address at that Conference and his additional lectures given before audiences in Great Britain, the European nations and America won great sympathy throughout the Western nations for the suppression of the Opium traffic. At Honolulu Mr. Koo gave an important address upon this subject, at which time he pointed out

the three divisions of nations interested in opium. One group he stated constituted the producing nations; another group constituted the consuming nations, while a third group made up the manufacturing nations. Because the Geneva Conference was unable to limit production of raw materials such as opium and cocoa leaf needed for medical or scientific purposes, the opium problem still remains an unsettled one as far as procedure is concerned. Mr. Koo while at Geneva was impressed with the strong organization of the drug and opium interests of the world; the encouragement given by certain nations to the licensing of opium traffic and the lack of public opinion in various countries against this great issue. It is encouraging, however, to note that in China public opinion is rapidly growing against the use of opium in spite of the recent increases in the



International delegates at Pan-Pacific Conference, Honolulu, July 1925.  
(Chinese delegates insert)

trade, due to militarists who desire its revenue. It is hoped that the failure of the Geneva Conference may not serve as an encouragement to this nefarious traffic.



## The Institute of Pacific Relations.

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From July 1st. to 15th., 1925, there was held at Honolulu an important conference originally initiated by the different National Y. M. C. A.'s, whose aim was to furnish an opportunity to the leaders of the various countries, especially those in the Pacific basin, to exchange experiences and frankly talk over their common problems.

One hundred and eleven active members attended from nine different countries. They brought with them considerable scepticism about the practical results possible to such a gathering. They realized it was experimental and to some of them the difficulties seemed insurmountable. They expected perhaps a few perfunctory addresses, some platitudes of a good sort, some rather dry papers on rather dry subjects, and discussions from which all the really

controversial factors in the Pacific would be carefully and effectively barred. They went away, back to their countries, with entirely different feelings. They had had two weeks of the frankest, most refreshing exchange of thought and opinion possible to conceive. It did not end in talk. This Institute, by its recognition of certain vital, Pacific problems is charting the way to avoid some perilous rocks, reefs and shoals.

The program consisted of round-table discussions by small groups within the conference, having stenographic service; general forum meetings of the entire institute for general discussion; and lectures and addresses given during the evening and open to the public.

The personnel of the China delegation of twelve representatives included one member of the National Committee Y. M. C. A., Dr. L. N. Chang of Hankow; and two of the National Committee secretaries, viz. T. Z. Koo and L. T. Chen.

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"China is now a republic and whether she can be healthy or not depends upon whether the people are good or bad. Great reconstructive work is needed, but where can we find an organization able to meet the situation? My answer to this question is found in the Young Men's Christian Association. I consider this organization the most indispensable in China to-day, and we should do our utmost to propagate it."

LI YUAN-HUNG



"There are many international associations at work in the world to-day. Before the war there were 600. The number was greatly decreased during the war so that there are now only 329. These associations represent many interests. Among these many movements where does the Y. M. C. A. stand? For many years it has been one of the strongest forces uniting the nations.

I am one of those to whose tradition Christianity was lacking. I had to examine its teachings from the ground up. It was only through the Y. M. C. A. that I came to see the spacious objects of Christ, for the objects of the Y. M. C. A. are spacious. They include everything making for the betterment of society, the amelioration of suffering and the glorifying of Christ. There is a wave of nationalism abroad in the world. It is I think a passing phase, a result of the war. There are many new nations, and these must be nationalistic. Young nations must solidify themselves and their neighbors are bound to become affected. After this phase has passed the world will have a better idea of what the internationalism is which the Y. M. C. A. has so long preached and practised. There is something in the mentality of the Y. M. C. A. leaders which has schooled them to think internationally and to look at international questions without prejudice. This is the spirit most lacking and most needed in the world to-day".— **Extracts from notes of an address by Dr. Nitobe, Under Secretary of the League of Nations, at Shanghai, February, 1925.**



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PDF, pp. 14-15

## TRANSCRIPT

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The personnel of the China delegation of twelve representatives included one member of the National Committee Y. M. C. A., Dr. L. N. Chang of Hankow; and two of the National Committee secretaries, viz. T. Z. Koo and L. T. Chen.

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"China is now a republic and whether she can be healthy or not depends upon whether the people are good or bad. Great reconstructive work is needed, but where can we find an organization able to meet the situation? My answer to this question is found in the Young Men's Christian Association. I consider this organization the most indispensable in China to-day, and we should do our utmost to propagate it."

LI YUAN-HUNG



"There are many international associations at work in the world to-day. Before the war there were 600. The number was greatly decreased during the war so that there are now only 320. These associations represent many interests. Among these many movements where does the Y. M. C. A. stand? For many years it has been one of the strongest forces uniting the nations.

I am one of those to whose tradition Christianity was lacking. I had to examine its teachings from the ground up. It was only through the Y. M. C. A. that I came to see the spacious objects of Christ, for the objects of the Y. M. C. A. are spacious. They include everything making for the betterment of society, the amelioration of suffering and the glorifying of Christ. There is a wave of nationalism abroad in the world. It is I think a passing phase, a result of the war. There are many new nations, and these must be nationalistic. Young nations must solidify themselves and their neighbors are bound to become affected. After this phase has passed the world will have a better idea of what the internationalism is which the Y. M. C. A. has so long preached and practised. There is something in the mentality of the Y. M. C. A. leaders which has schooled them to think internationally and to look at international questions without prejudice. This is the spirit most lacking and most needed in the world to-day". - **Extracts from notes of an address by Dr. Nitobe, Under Secretary of the League of Nations, at Shanghai, February, 1925.**