

Parsonage,
First Presbyterian Church,
Nyack, N. Y.

Aug. 7th. 1894.

Rev. W. H. Belden.

Dear Brother; --

Since I have just finished a letter to our Recording Secretary, I must next write to the Corresponding of the I. M. U. How often since leaving Clifton Springs not far from two months ago I have purposed writing you and others there, cannot be told. It is enough that I had much to say, and some has been forgotten. Yet it seemed worth saying.

First, I want to express my gratification and gratitude to you for the excellent program you prepared. That it was followed is proof that it met the need. It certainly relieved very much each interested one during the Convention. It showed that we can follow an order, even if there be deviations, and the order be not altogether complete.

I was at Cleveland at C. E. Convention, and met several members of I. M. U. While Cleveland had a tremendous crowd and no end of enthusiasm, it was not to be compared with our I. M. U. meetings, is the sentiment expressed by all. Though I thought we had had better meetings, yet after reaching home and thinking over the matter carefully, I doubt if we ever did. There was a power present that made us all feel we had a mighty Guest. We have added members who will prove more than helpful in the future. Amerman is enthusiastic. He spoke at a number of Cleveland meetings, and enjoyed them, but declared that they were unlike what we had at Clifton Springs.

But a few words of suggestion for our future. We are no longer allowed to doubt what will be the future of the I. M. U., except what will it develop. It has a place, and will hold it. But what God means to make it do, is yet uncertain. I cannot help thinking that He has a great mission for it, and we missionary "exiles" are to do the human management. One suggestion, and it relates to what was at times the weakest part of the magnificent series of meetings, let leaders be selected, if possible, for prayer meetings before the time of service. If left to Executive Com., I will see that they are chosen, and that a line of thought is given for the meetings, so that there may be no question nor dullness, as far as arrangement beforehand is possible about interesting meetings. In the first two admirable meetings

we would have had far greater results had Dr. Pearson spoken less, and Bishop Thoburn given more time to prayer. In next there was a swing to other extreme, though leader, unprepared, simply let the meeting swing. Then the Consecration meeting, which ought to have been the best of all, was a lamentable failure, because it was a talk meeting rather than consecration. A leader, even though a master as were Pearson Thoburn and Young, must not take much time in talking for a prayer meeting or consecration meeting. That first meeting, with nearly a dozen prayers in succession, and again with 16 sentence prayers in succession, and the added Amen of all, showed what a mighty power was present. Talking weakened that power, as was seen at the next meeting, while the third was abnormally weak. Another feature added to the interest, and, I think, power of farewell meeting; it was that another than our President presided. Time was so precious, and so many to speak that he would necessarily have taken more time, because he knew so well those going out. It seems to me a time for the missionaries ~~leaving~~ ^{not those staying to} ~~the~~ ^{head}. Every moment, except for prayer song and advice, should be allowed to them. Ford, by the way, appears a master in whatever he undertakes.

Another suggestion is, that we under officers take more of detail work, and let Dr. Gracey be more free to be at meetings or receive new comers, or preside. We are learning his methods, and needs of the Union, that we can work right in his line, and save him a great deal of care and work, and allow him to do his regular work with far more power and success. In this there is not a thought of criticism of Dr. Gracey, but of relief for him.

I am beginning to foresee difficulty for our I. M. U. in its growth. Its size in the near future may astonish us, if allowed to increase without hindrance. What will we do? Put an annex to Dr. Foster's hospitality? There may be a need of an ecumenical council of missionaries with all present ~~some for that; no others~~. But there will be needed an ~~annex~~ ^{annex} to his accommodations. For that we may by prayer make provision. My own prophesy is that we will have, unless unforeseen events hinder, 200 at the I. M. U. next year.

At Cleveland I saw your predecessor, Anderson of Bristol, my father's pastor of years ago. He asked about and spoke most warmly of you and your work at Bristol, and hoped you would be able to return again to work before long.

You may remember Miss Ben Oziel, for a day at I. M. U. She is now with us, our guest for a day or two, and to address my people to night. She will also speak at C. E. gathering of local societies in Nyack Thursday.

How are you feeling, and how rapidly gaining health? I was so busy at Clifton that I scarcely had time to see

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and talk with you about health, literary work or anything. Are you doing any literary work? I am at it again, in a sort of half work, half neglect. But neglect because of so many other things in hand.

No doubt you have learned of the missionary extension idea in Christian Endeavor. It seems to be a growing idea and mighty movement in embryo, though the shell broke more than a year ago. The chick is already a giant. I had talk, and, since return from Cleveland, correspondence with S. L. Mershon, leader inspirer and president of the movement. From what I can learn, it is likely to make a revolution in missions at home. With the Christian Endeavorers, it is sure to take and grow. If good speakers can be obtained, the interest will deepen, and mission news become as common as it is mighty in arousing the church. I have given Mershon points on speakers of I. M. U., and presume he will ask more of you and Mr. Gracey. If our I. M. U. can help the cause through this movement, I doubt not we will all be ready to do our part.

I begin to look for great developments in missions from war between China and Japan. What will be the outcome of that war few dare say. But it is likely to open the nations more to missions, and give them the sympathy of the people after a time. At first there may be persecution murder and massacre; but the mission spirit will assert itself and reveal its character to the people. More than that, Christian nations will reveal, at least I hope they will, the better spirit animating them. Chinese and Japanese will see that conquest is not the purpose of Christians, but commerce, as nations, and elevation and salvation as missionaries.

I fear there may come complications between and with nations. England is associated with China; Russia is eager for Corea; America favorable to Japan; Germany and France more or less interlocked with China, the former favorably for, the latter otherwise for revenge. What will arise few can guess. But great and distressing complications may come at any time. There can be but one ultimate outcome, for God reigns.

Let me hear from you at your leisure. And, by the way, send as soon as you have a supply, large sheets of I. M. U. paper.

With warm regards to you yours and all friends,
heartily yours,

J. A. Davis.