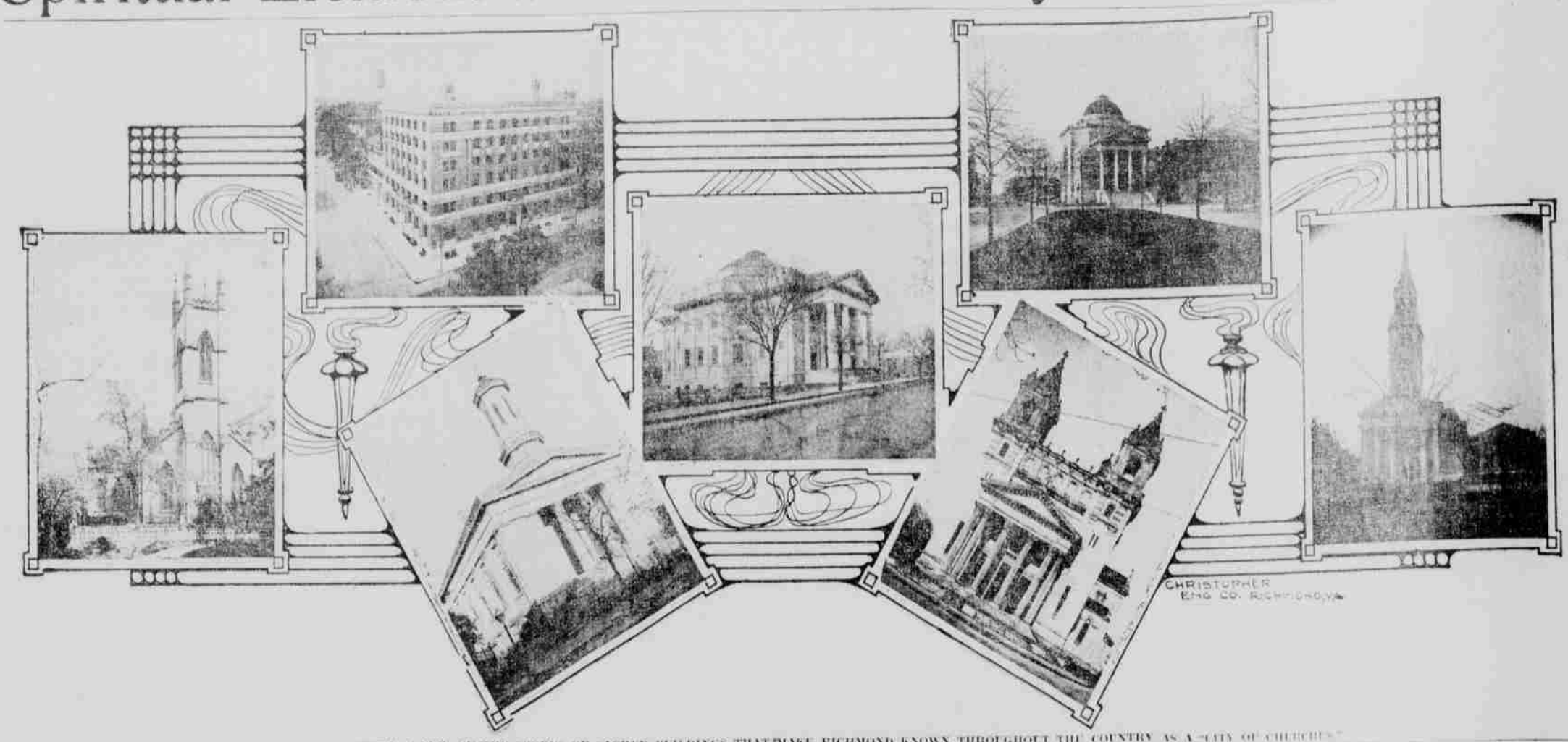
Spiritual Element a Factor in the City's Great Prosperity



ABOVE ARE SHOWN A FEW OF THE SCORES OF SACRED BUILDINGS THAT MAKE RICHMOND KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AS A "CITY OF CHURCHES."

CREEDS FORGOTTEN WHEN ALL DENOMINATIONS UNITE TO HELP IN BETTERMENT OF RICHMOND

Essentially a Spiritual-Minded City. There Being 174 Churches, With 60,000 Members—Churches Play An Important Part in the Development of Richmond

It would, indeed, be a hard matter to convince a native born citizen of Richmond that he did not live in the best city in the best State in the Union. If culture, refinement, intelligence and education are to be taken as a criterion, the people both of this noted old city have a perfect right to be proud of the fact that they live where they will, in a city so favored and blessed as this "Great Queen of All Dominions."

Richmond is peculiarly blessed in her churches which have played a very important part in her rapid growth and development. This is an indisputable fact, although accompanied by a certain class of critics. An immediate link has been created by them which has made much—even to the city's material prosperity. The best evidence lies with women of the city, those who are really "doing things," those who are recognized as leaders in thought and action, who are for the most part also active workers in the work of the church. In fact, one of Richmond's greatest assets is at her feet—her wives. Without them and their influence all else would fail. This may seem a strong statement, and yet it is thought by persons who know its truthfulness.

Churches Number 174.

Statistics of a public nature either bore and looked upon as more or less uninteresting. However, the following may be of more than ordinary interest, either personal or concerning Richmond solely. There are 174 white and 27 colored churches, a total of 174, with a combined membership in somewhere near 60,000. This does not mean, however, that all church members in the city are included in these figures, for it is a well-known fact that there are hundreds of men and women in the city today who are not yet identified with any local congregation. The Sunday schools of the city have an enrollment of eighty 12,000, with an average attendance of over 8,000. This is a fair index of the religious spirit of the city, and shows that the influences of church work are its growing greater every year.

The great amount of good accomplished by the church organizations in Richmond cannot be estimated. In almost every congregation there are one or more organizations engaged in special work of various kinds, all looking to the betterment and uplift of humanity. Many of the churches are represented on the foreign mission field by one or more workers, while the home field is being covered by local workers, who are given largely of their time, talents and means in support of our charitable and other institutions of like character.

One of the most delightful features of religious work in Richmond is the spirit of peace and brotherly love, which prevails among all churches. When it comes to the support of a great charitable institution, or when it becomes necessary for people to unite in some other good work, Richmond's people are ever ready to do so. Some years ago, a number of ministers of this city, realizing the necessity for some action in order to bring about a better social condition, formed a union with little difference as to religious affiliations. Men and women of all creeds and varied shades of religious belief joined hands in this work, and some days later the "one hundred" and more, stood in band and alliance to defender.

Bound for Single Purpose.

It is strange should attend one of the monthly meetings of the Ministers' Association of Richmond, the membership of which is composed of ministers of almost every denomination, he would be astonished, nothing but good words in regard to what from the large number of ministers present, those who were Baptists, Methodists, and Episcopalians, differences of opinion and belief. The thought is uppermost in every mind is, What can we do to help Richmond—not only from a business standpoint, but also from the standpoint of purity and fair morals.

Church-Going City.

Richmond also enjoys the reputation of being and deemed to be an exceedingly "church-going city." Our streets are literally lined with people on every Sunday morning going to and coming from our churches. What of course there are many who do not, many, too many, who do not take advantage of their religious privileges, still the vast majority of our citizens attend church with a degree of regularity, which is not only commendable, but very encouraging.

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NO MATTER HOW LOW THEY MAY HAVE FALLEN, RICHMOND HAS CHARITIES WHICH TURN DEAF EAR TO NONE WHO APPEAL FOR ASSISTANCE

Richmond is a city of charities and good works. Some than fifteen dissents who have gotten into trouble in the matter of caring for the poor before they become burdensome and hinderers on the community. The Associated Charities is the largest organization of its sort in the city, but many individual agencies and the Salvation Army Corps, especially efficient for good, add to the list of sensitive workers for the spirit of the entire humane classes.

The Associated Charities of Richmond was organized in 1905 to combine into one organization the Citizens' Relief Association, the City Mission and the city work of the Baptist Council of Richmond and Manchester. The new organization, the Associated Charities of Richmond, took over the offices of the Baptist Council and appointed James Lochrane, the secretary of the Baptist Council, as general secretary of the Associated Charities, to organize and consolidate the charitable work of the city of Richmond. The City Mission became the visiting committee of the Associated Charities and the Citizens' Relief Association now represented as the finance committee of the Associated Charities.

Jealousy, misunderstanding and the pace in the City Mission undoubtedly caused the Associated Charities of Richmond a standing that enabled the organization to cope with the problems of the city from the beginning of the organization.

Ballard House.

The Ballard House, at the northeast corner of Franklin and Fourteenth Streets, which had been used by the Baptist Council as a central neighborhood house, became the headquarters of the Associated Charities.

The Associated Charities maintains the following chief departments:

A Bureau of Registration, open from 9 A. M. to 5 P. M., to receive applicants; a Bureau of Investigation, which records the condition and resources of each applicant, in order that intelligent and adequate treatment may be given; a Bureau of Information, where the contributors and the public may receive information regarding families or individuals they are helping; a Department of Relief, where aid is given to individuals and families in need; a Wayfarers' Lodge, open from 6 A. M. to 10 P. M., which provides temporary lodging and work for homeless men; a Shelter for Women and Children without homes or support; Dependent Women's and Children's Aid, to enforce the laws for their protection and endeavor good mothers to keep their children with them; a Labor Bureau, to find work for the unemployed, and a campaign against mendicancy, to rid the streets and office buildings of professional beggars and expose imposters.

Great Work Accomplished.

The following concise statement of the activities of the Associated Charities gives at once an intelligent idea of the great size of the neighborhoods and other work being done by this agency:

Total number of applications for aid, 6,858; for general help, 2,429; for shelter, 4,429.

House Account.—Total number of beds provided, 4,189; in men's department, 3,903; in women's department, 286; in children's department, 810. Total number of meals provided, 12,558; in men's department, 9,152; in women's department, 786; in children's department, 2,620. Days' work given in exchange for help, 139.

Relief Fund.—Loads of groceries given, 2,489; special help given in sickness—orders, 361; tons of milk given, 2,566; articles of clothing given, 1,581; pairs of shoes given, 252.

Provident Fund.—Loads of emergency fuel—orders, 621; help on rent—cases, 23; loans made—cases, 22; hauling wood and moving—loads, 363; transportation furnished—cases, 240.

Number of special investigations and reports, 758; number of families helped during the year (does not include persons given food and shelter in the lodgings), 625; number of new families food during the year, 125.

EXPORT SUPPLIES TO BIG FISHERIES

Forty years ago some Richmond business men began in a small way to manufacture fish net and twine. The business grew gradually. It was found that an exactly similar industry had been founded about the same time in Milwaukee. For convenience the two firms combined and established a large factory at East Haddam, Conn. This factory now supplies both the Richmond and Milwaukee stores, as well as selling direct to the wholesale trade.

The amount of the export trade of the store here proves the excellence of the business and the advantage of Richmond's location. Fisheries in Canada, Nova Scotia and South America are supplied with equipment from the Richmond branch. Netting of all sorts, rope, twines, corks, beads and all things are shipped out from here in very large quantities, especially in certain seasons of the year. Three traveling salesmen are on the road under the supervision of the Richmond branch of the business, and send back here orders from every part of the United States.

The south is a good field for this line of business, as is shown conclusively by the growth of the Richmond branch, in full proportion with the Milwaukee branch, one supplying the Eastern and the other the Western.

BORN IN Y. M. C. A. CAMPAIGN, GREATER RICHMOND SPIRIT HAS DOMINATED ASSOCIATION WORK

Richmond Has Splendid Equipment to Build Character in Her Young Men and Those Who Come Here to Live. Organization Has a Department for Every Need

Prominent in a [illegible] chain of over 8,000 associations, organized in 1851, two years after the parent organization in London, and coming early after the organization in Boston and Montreal, the Young Men's Christian Association of Richmond will soon celebrate its sixtieth anniversary. The association was organized in the lecture room of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, the first president being Peter V. Daniel, Jr. From the very beginning of its work, the directorate and membership have included many of the most active Christian laymen of the growing city. An interesting fact is that the expenses of the first year were $64.31.

A Tenant for Years.

From 1854 to 1867 the association was a tenant, the first headquarters being located in Rankin Hall, Eleventh and Bank Streets.

Immediately following the evangelistic campaign conducted by D. L. Moody in the early eighties, through the initiative of interested laymen, Mr. Moody gave impetus to the building movement, at a morning breakfast. This resulted in the erection of the building at Main and Sixth Streets, which has occupied by the association twenty-three years.

A World-Famous Campaign.

The whirlwind campaign conducted in January, 1907, by the Richmond association, was of worldwide interest. Prominent men were at the back of this movement. Mr. O. A. Hawkins, then president of the association, was chairman of the committee, the late Joseph Bryan chairman of the citizens' committee, and Neil S. Mills chairman of the young business men's committee. Almost a score of the best men in the city were enlisted as captains or teams, and had associated with them a hundred active living workers.

The Greater Richmond Spirit.

Few will deny that the Greater Richmond spirit was born during this notable campaign, when the citizens got together at noon lunch and raised $227,000 in fifteen days, which established a world's Christmas record for seven years. Inquiries as to how to do it came from as far as Australia. A notable direct outcome of this campaign was the Business Men's Class, one of the leading organizations of the city.

The New Building.

The new building, at Grace and Seventh Streets, is one of the best in the world, its location ideal and its arrangement calculated to produce the largest results at a minimum expense. The membership at the close of the fiscal year was 1,744, and while the association has felt the recent stringency of the financial market somewhat, the leaders believe that the fourth year in the building will close with a larger membership than last year. The effort is to keep the membership fee within the reach of the average young man and lad.

The Boys.

The association fully realizes that perhaps the most important factor from the standpoint of the future of the city is the boy, and therefore especial attention is being given to safe and sane work among boys. The effort is not for a crowd, but to do a work that will be permanent, building and produce from the boy a man who will stand for the highest Christian manhood. The boys work is carried on in four sections for those from twenty years of age down to eighteen years of age, and at night for employed boys from fourteen to eighteen years of age. The features for boys include health exercise for health, shower baths and swimming instruction in one of the best swimming pools in the country, 20 by 40 feet. The Boys' Sunday Afternoon Club is one of the best features of the work. The average attendance for the past two months of boys from all over the city is 127. In addition to these features, there are the little study groups, social groups, hikes, summer camps, and above all and better than all, the personal touch with the individual boy.

Features for Men.

The daily attendance at the building was never larger than now, nor the interest deeper. In fact, never before have so many of the leading business men realized the necessity for exercise and set aside time for it.

The merit Sunday afternoon meetings for the past two months, all held in the association building, have had an average attendance of almost 300, exceeding any average for meetings held in the building during the past seven years. The "extension" meetings are conducted each week, one in each of six industrial plants.

Other Features.

Noticable among the other features of the work is the dormitory equipment, ninety-five rooms for young men, with home comforts and surroundings, such as would encourage any young man who has any desire to do so to grow into stronger manhood and become a more useful member of society. These rooms average from $3.50 per week to the three-room suites with private bath, and some $5 per week, the average for the entire dormitory rooms being less than $3 per week.

Widespread Influence.

However, the most important work of the association is not contained in the above-named features. It is the "much door," providing a place where any young man may go in the hour of need for safe counsel and encouragement. Indeed, many a business man can testify that in the hour of stress the counsel he found at the association was such as to make him a better man.

The Richmond association, too, is only one link in a great chain, with a membership in the United States alone, with the other countries of the world bringing the membership up to over a million. Just the other day a young man came direct from Scotland to the association building and found a welcome, the interchange of membership being one of the most valuable features of the great and growing work.

Secretary in China.

The Richmond association through the cooperation of a number of its members is supporting W. P. Mills, Richmond's representative, at Nanking, China, this being one of the progressive movements of the present year.

In the Regional Bank Fight.

When the fight was on for the setting of a regional bank for Richmond the association entered into it with the fight, and a strong letter advocating Richmond was sent to every secretary in Virginia, West Virginia, North and South Carolina, and to secretaries in other states. It was felt that proper influence might be brought to bear on representatives and senators toward securing a regional bank for our city.

Railroad Association.

The Railroad Young Men's Christian Association, located on the second floor with the Main Street depot, modern in every equipment. The building is new, beautiful and up-to-date.

While this association is composed of railroad men entirely, its effort is for men with railroad men. In fact the most senior every Sunday afternoon a gathering was held of the greatly interested in the larger social topics and problems of the day. The meetings were fraught of much good, as a better understanding of these questions on one side.

The furnished swimming pool in the building of the Railroad Young Men's Christian Association is a great attraction to the membership. The association building is especially fitted up as a stopping place for railroad men from all over the country who come to Richmond for a few days, who "lie over" here between trips. An active secretary has succeeded in keeping the work of the association before the general public and has made the institution of great importance to its members.

BEAUTIFUL THEATERS SUPPLY RECREATION

RICHMOND SURPASSED BY NO SOUTHERN CITY IN QUALITY OF PLAYHOUSES.

As in other ways, Richmond holds a prominent position in the world of Southern hospitality, and with the possible exception of New Orleans no other Southern city boasts of as many and beautiful playhouses as are to be found in Richmond. The number of theatres is being rapidly increased by the erection of modern playhouses fitted with all the latestive known to the art of theater construction. There is someone moving picture theaters scattered throughout the length and breadth of the city, and all enjoying profitable business. Several other moving picture theaters are contemplated and plans for at least two have been drawn. Within the city there are three theaters devoted to vaudeville—two playing popular priced vaudeville and catering exclusively to the family patronage, and one with higher prices of admission.

The weekly offerings of these playhouses are diversified and afford an abundance of entertainment to the population of the city. There is a permanent stock company presenting weekly plays that have enjoyed successful runs on Broadway. The dramatic and musical productions are housed in another sumptuous theater, where the bookings are made with a single eye to please a discriminating public. For large conventions and other large gatherings there is a spacious convention hall attached to the city.

The open unoccupied parks in and around the city are ample for the population, and during the summer months become the mecca for thousands of people the excellent street car service maintained putting them within a few minutes' ride of the majority of the population.

In all branches of amusements reports of business are encouraging, and the several theaters are in a highly prosperous condition, with a bright outlook for a continuation of good business until well in the midsummer months.

IN WHOLESALE DRUGS RICHMOND TO FRONT

Richmond is in no sense a minor drug market. On the other hand, four large concerns are doing here an immense amount of business. There are on the road so many drug salesmen on business from no city other Southern city. Drug stores all over the South are stocked from this market, the houses here carrying an usually complete line of stock, all sorts of aids made to the profession being ready for shipment at any time.

With flourishing retailers the drug business here has invoiced $458,700, and make annual sales to the amount of $4,577,103. This is not incomparable, viewed in any light.

The drug business of Richmond is one of the oldest here. It is worthy of note that the stability of the firms is such that they have remained largely in the hands of descendants of the original owners.

NEW YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION HOME WILL HOUSE WORK OF VITAL IMPORTANCE

Every one of us who is a member of the Young Women's Christian Association should have a sense of ownership in it.

The new building is handsome and dignified, yet very homelike and inviting, and there is an air of permanency and solidity about it which guarantees the steady growth of the work in scope and usefulness. Out from this central building will spread an ever widening circle of service to girls in every walk of life, and into it will pour a steady stream of young life in search of recreation, companionship, instruction, guidance and encouragement, or of opportunities for helpfulness to others.

The interior of the building is very attractive, the whole effect being one of light, space, durability and serviceableness. On the left of the wide entrance hall is the library, a large, many-windowed room, with bookcases built into the wall in every available space, and a big, open fireplace at one end. With its easy chairs, comfortable Davenport, writing desks, books and magazines, this room offers not only a cozy place in which to read or write, but a most attractive center for social gatherings and friendly interviews.

The various secretaries' offices are on the right of the hall, including the general secretary's office and those of the membership and business, educational and extension departments. There is also a checkroom conveniently located on this side of the entrance for general use.

A flight of steps at the rear of the entrance hall leads to the gymnasium floor level, and here, between the library and the gymnasium, near the stairway leading to the second floor, is a rest room, fitted up with two couches, chairs and a dressing table, where persons may rest and afterwards freshen up.

Beautiful Gymnasium.

The gymnasium is beautiful. It has sufficient floor space to drill a small array and is a challenge to all to bring in enough recruits at the beginning of the fall term to demonstrate the need of a large, well equipped gymnasium. The walls are builded in glazed brick, and the floor is unobstructed by pillars or supports. The room is entirely surrounded by a gallery for spectators.

Immediately under the gymnasium, in the basement, are the swimming pool, dressing rooms, lockers and showers. The pool is forty by twenty feet, with a depth of three feet at the upper end and seven feet at the lower end. The dressing rooms are conveniently grouped around the showers, one shower serving four rooms.

The lunch room, or cafeteria, occupies the entire front of the basement and is entered from the street by a short flight of steps. Ninety-six people can be seated here at one time. By means of screens, private tables can be arranged for at one end of the room.

The second floor contains the auditorium, a committee room, the domestic science room and the gallery of the gymnasium. The auditorium will be used for vesper services, lectures, membership meetings and any other public gatherings in connection with the work. It will also be rented to other women's organizations for lectures or entertainments. The seats are removable, so that the room may be used for any purpose.

Domestic Science.

The domestic science room is large and well equipped, and the classes conducted in it promise to be unusually well attended. Hitherto the only instruction of this kind has been given at the John Marshall High School, while the popular demand for it has been very great. The association is in a position to meet requests for morning, afternoon and evening classes.

On the third floor are rooms for the Campfire Girls, general club work, the Bible and mission study classes, dressmaking classes and whatever other educational work may be developed. This floor will be one of the busiest and most useful departments in the work. The searchlight committee has been given a little room of its own on the third floor.

At the back of the third floor there are several rooms fitted up as bedrooms. Two of these rooms will be occupied by secretaries, who will live in the building. Another is to be used by one of the travelers' aid staff, and two more are intended for emergency cases. The travelers' aid worker will have supervision of the emergency rooms.

Many people ask why the boarding home and the central building are not under the same roof. It was at first the intention of the board to combine the two, but after investigation and careful consideration it was found best to conduct them as separate institutions. It is the aim of the Young Women's Christian Association to make every girl affiliated with any one of its departments feel that she is an integral part of the association.

In conducting a home for self-supporting young women it has been the association's object to make it, in fact as well as in name, a "home"—that is, a place which belongs peculiarly to those living in it. If the home in which fifty or sixty girls are living is also the gathering place for hundreds of others the homelike atmosphere must inevitably be destroyed. It matters not how much in sympathy with the general work of the association the residents of the home may be, and how readily they may mingle with outside members, they could not feel that a building which must always be thrown open to the public is in the strictest sense their home. That the residence at 108 West Cary Street meets a genuine need is proved by the fact that it is taxed to its capacity, and while it offers a real home on most reasonable terms, it also meets its own running expenses.

But the association owes the majority to its general membership that it owes to its home members.

The central building is for all of Richmond's young women who care to avail themselves of the privileges; the boarding home is distinctly the home of its residents, and in order most effectually to serve the best interests of every association member, the two must be separately maintained in the feeling of the board of directors.