Samuel B. Capen

Gordon Hill

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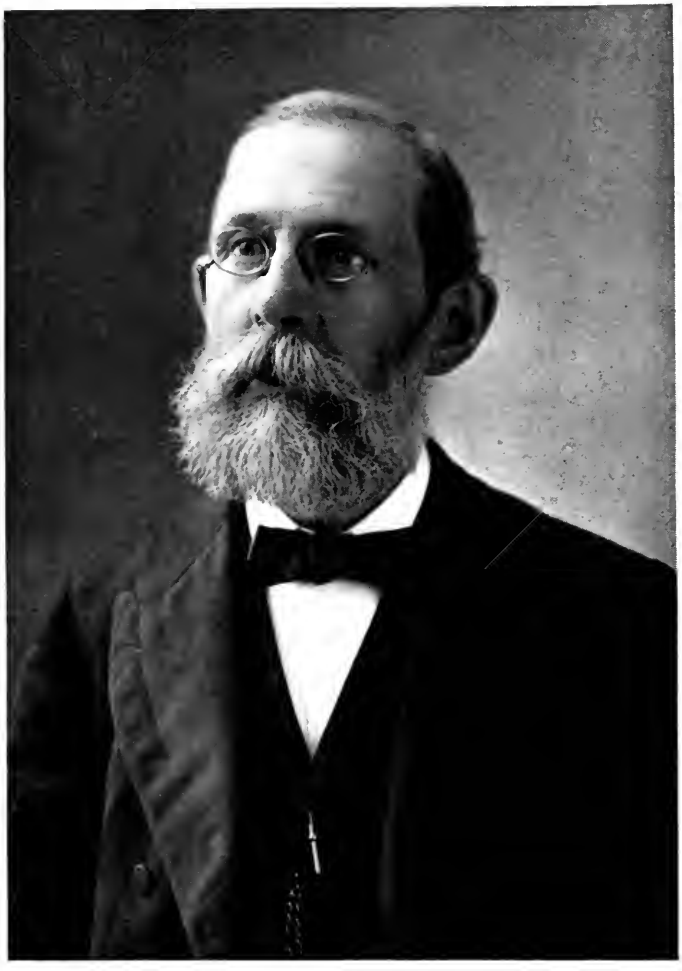

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# SAMUEL BILLINGS CAPEN

## HIS LIFE AND WORK

*by*

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## CHAPTER I

## HIS PLACE IN OUR TIME

Some men are great because of certain powers they possess within themselves. Others are great and are remembered by posterity because of what they have accomplished. Homer, Dante, Abraham Lincoln, were great souls apart from anything they did; they possessed that divine gift we call genius and they belong by birth to the immortals. Others are not great either by virtue of their intellect or imagination, but impelled by their consecration to some fine ideal they accomplish important results which compel us to hold them in loving remembrance. They are great because of what they do.

In this latter class we must place Samuel Billings Capen, a man who belonged to what may be truly called the new Christianity and who brought about results that have made a distinct impression upon the social and religious life of our time.

The excuse for adding another biography to the many that have come to our generation is that Mr. Capen stood for an ideal which is becoming increasingly the glory of the Christian Church, an ideal which is saving the Church from the shame which had come upon her and promises to make her the most glorious of all the institutions of tomorrow. To call our age materialistic is far from

the truth. Our age is in some respects the most idealistic of all times. The fight for social righteousness has never enlisted so many brave hearts nor been so intense as at the present hour. The cry for economic justice and for a more democratic method both in the production and the distribution of wealth, the demand for civic righteousness, for the substitution of arbitration for war, for the promotion of peace and good will between nations, and the growing consciousness of the need for the brotherhood of rich and poor, employer and employed, have never been so intense or persistent. Editors, lecturers, social workers and clergymen have all become preachers whose gospel is that of the social uplift.

Yet in spite of this fact, it is also probably true that there were never more men living on the outside of things than at the present hour. The great springs of life are not only neglected; they are mistrusted. The confidence of man is placed in the dollar rather than in ideals, in material conditions and comforts rather than in the soul of Christianity. Men are living by bread alone rather than by the words that proceed out of the mouth of God. They deem it much more important to "get in on the ground floor" of a paying business than to spend time in the Upper Room, and consider it more worth while to stand among many with the winning interests than to stand alone with God.

This subtle distrust in idealism, though few men will confess to it, gives form today to the working creed of the vast majority of men. It is at bottom

a positive belief that the teachings of Jesus are impossible for practical use in the realm of affairs. They are humanity's most beautiful dream, but they cannot be applied to business nor to the practical politics of the world. They are man's comfort and inspiration, but they are also his despair, having no place in a labor union, in an employer's office or on either side of the salesman's counter.

Robert Ingersoll's crass infidelity and Tom Paine's open attacks upon Christianity, compared with this unconfessed but ever active distrust in the things of the spirit, were only as the attack of a child, compared to this mighty menace to the higher life. The former were open and answerable; the latter is hidden and cannot be reached. It makes no parties and draws no credal lines, but permeates to a greater or smaller extent the whole of society, not only taking from the soldier his vitality, but also weakening the very purpose for which he is to fight.

It is a form of unbelief, also, which is quite as common in the Church as outside of it. It often blinds the Church to its real work, frequently substituting the task of building up a great ecclesiastical organization for the Christian task of bringing the Kingdom of God on the earth. If careful investigation of the real state of the Christian Church should be made there might be wailing and gnashing of teeth. How many men would be found who give liberally for the building up of a large membership and for strengthening the material conditions of a church as an institution

but have never tried the simple experiment of applying the teaching of Jesus to the politics of their community, or to the industry in which they are engaged? How many men would be found who not only have never tried these experiments but who do not believe that they would be practical experiments to try? Should the investigation be made, the world might be astonished to discover that thousands of men are giving money and energy to maintain an institution which has never yet seriously undertaken the real task given to it by its Lord, and chiefly for the reason that the members of the Church do not believe that the task is practical.

This weakened form of Christianity is not wholly to be condemned. Even in its anæmic condition it is still probably the best thing that is in operation for the uplift of mankind. In spite of the subtle unbelief of confessed Christians and the gross materialism of the Church, the spirit of Jesus has permeated and transformed the institutions of society and the moral life of nations as has the life of no other man. If we should take out of our civilization what we have received from Christianity there would be nothing left of those things we value most highly. Our standards of morality, the conception of the family, the sacrificial life of the home, the democracy based upon the principle, "to every man according to his need, from every man according to his ability,"—especially as it is revealed in our public school system,—the wise and loving care for the poor—these are things that have gradually

emerged from Jesus' teachings of love and brotherhood.

It might be argued that this uplift has come from the irresistible life of Jesus much as the sun sends its cleansing light throughout the earth, rather than from any positive program on the part of his followers; and some might even contend that it has come in spite of the blunders and unbelief of his disciples. Yet either position would do a cruel injustice to the long succession of consecrated men and women who, according to their knowledge and so far as they have been able to rise above their environment, have tried to be true members of the Church.

When this is admitted, however, it must still be confessed that men have never undertaken, on any large scale, the real program marked out by our Lord for his Church. Contented to have the leaven slowly permeate the entire lump, they have neither had the courage to seek first the Kingdom of God nor the faith to believe that their prayer, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as in heaven," would find any answer.

The last century, especially the later half of it, witnessed the rise of a new class of men who believed that the social world could be won for righteousness, and despised the whimpering attitude of those who declared that the moral ideal is only a dream, impossible of realization in the politics and business of mankind. They not only declared the possibility of this realization but seriously undertook the task of carrying their

idealism into political action and making it the very soul of the corporate life of society.

One division of this army, bent upon the task of making a new earth, included the social workers—the men and women who were pioneers in social settlements and reform movements—and the authors of those works which might roughly be classified as the new sociology. With a large part of these sincere and passionate souls the religious message was entirely omitted. Some of them were men who had grown weary of the platitudes of a lifeless orthodoxy which was only waiting to be buried. They had lost their faith in the Church and had left her that they might devote their energies to a field where they thought they could be of more service to mankind. Some of these social workers not only left the Church, but even lost their faith in religion and turned their attention to ethics as the force that could redeem the world.

A second class of men, however, remained in the Church. They saw her defects but they believed that the teachings of Jesus afforded the only program for the reformation of the social structure, and they consecrated their energies to the bringing upon earth of the Kingdom of God, as exemplified in the life of Jesus and defined in his teachings. To them ethics without religion was like an engine without steam, and to fail to utilize the teachings of Jesus was to ignore the highest ideals that had ever been given to the race. Some of these leaders were clergymen and some were laymen; some held the new theology and

others held only a modified form of the old New England theology, remaining conservative in their thinking and following the faith of their fathers. But they were united by a great motive, the desire to make the kingdoms of the earth the Kingdom of our Lord.

To this latter class belonged the layman and business man, Mr. Samuel Billings Capen. He remained to the last day of his life a conservative in theology, though with a sympathy broad enough to tolerate the most liberal wing of his Church, but the passion of his soul was to bring the Kingdom of God on the earth. He had an interest in every social movement for the improvement of the race, but he gave his time, money, energy, and prayers that Jesus and his teachings might rule the hearts of all men and become the life of all institutions.

In speaking before a company of boys in 1893 Mr. Capen said: "If I may be allowed to say one earnest word it is this, that you should all have some great, noble, unselfish ambition as the ruling motive of your life. To have an education without this is like having a well-appointed steamship without power, and to be at the mercy of every current of the ocean. Oliver Wendell Holmes has well said that the human race is divided into two classes, those who go ahead and do something, and those who sit still and inquire, 'Why wasn't it done the other way?' Take your place in the former class at once. Do not waste your time in criticizing other people, but day by day be persistent in your purpose to make the world better

because of your living in it. 'It is not failure but low aim that is a crime.' ''

This was not only his advice to others; it was also the law of his own life from which he never departed. The purpose which ruled his entire being was none other than to conquer the whole world for God and truth. He believed it could be done and to this sublime task he devoted all his energies.

## CHAPTER II

## THE MAKING OF THE MAN

Mr. Samuel Billings Capen was born in Boston on December 12, 1842, in a humble home which stood near the sea, on the very spot where the South Union Station now stands.

It is difficult for those who know only the Boston of today to imagine even imperfectly the city into which this boy was born. James Elliot Cabot, in his "Memoirs of Emerson," gives a touch which brings to our imagination in some measure the section near the home of the Capens: "The Summer Street region was a boy's paradise, and echoed every holiday afternoon and mid-day recess with 'Coram' and 'Hy-spy'; having just the right admixture of open ground, fences, and thoroughfares, with intricacies and lurking-places of sheds and woodhouses, and here and there a deserted barn, with open doors and a remnant of hay long untouched. There was even a pond where a beginner might try his first skates; and the salt water was close by, with wharves where he might catch flounders and tom-cod. Then, near at hand, the Common, at that time a playground from end to end."

Boston was then a big town with lineaments which could be recognized, not only affording the opportunities of natural playgrounds and country life, but also—what was even more important to

her citizens—nurturing a community spirit. She had not grown so large as to become impersonal—merely a place where men carry on their business, and, if they are greedy and selfish, live by head alone, using the city as a means of adding a little cake to their diet. She was still small enough to have a distinct individuality. Though not without her rogues, she contained an unusually large number of men and women who were proud of her history, knew, at least, what her charter was, were familiar with the chief problems she had to confront and considered it their moral obligation to devote a part of their energy to her improvement. Her personality, as Henry Cabot Lodge in his "Early Memories" has suggested, "may have been narrow, austere, at times even harsh, but it was there, and it was strong and aggressive," a personality which inspired a devoted citizenship of the highest type.

It is not without significance that Samuel Capen, a sensitive youth, was born into such an atmosphere. Boys then were not very different from boys of our day. Fierce combats were waged every winter on the Common between the young giants of South Cove and North End and the aristocrats of Summer and Beacon Streets, until the aristocrats, as is always the case, were outnumbered and driven back in defeat into more secluded country places. Neighbors' apple trees were raided every fall and the beautiful flowers of carefully-prepared gardens disappeared in a night. There was then, as in every time, a great mass of unimpressionable dullness which no in-

fluence could awaken; but no boy who was alert, possessing intellectual promise, could grow to young manhood in these surroundings without gaining the consciousness that he had a history and was part of a community. It was an atmosphere that left a deep impression upon the young Capen, an influence he never escaped; and it later revealed itself in his efforts toward civic reform as well as in his devoted citizenship.

But we must not forget that he was part of a family as well as of a community. We are constantly tempted to think of men as individuals, as isolated, great or small in their lonely personalities. But, in reality, no man so exists. At best every personality belongs to that glorious trinity of father, mother and child. Part of that social trinity we remain, never being in any true sense individuals, but always part of a larger whole. Hence nothing could be more important to a man than the family that gave him existence.

In this respect Samuel Capen was fortunate. He was the second son of Samuel Childs Capen and Anne Billings Capen. The Capen family had long been connected in honorable ways with Boston and its vicinity. Samuel B. Capen belonged to the eighth generation from Bernard and Jane Capen, who came to Dorchester in the ship *Mary and John,* May 30, 1630, and were the progenitors of all the Capens in New England. His great-grandfather, Christopher Capen, who lived at Stoughton and married Abigail Thayer, a direct descendant of John Alden of the Plymouth Colony, rushed into his house at the time of the

battle of Lexington, exclaiming, "The war has broken out," took down his gun and ran without another word to the defense of his country. But it was so far to Lexington that he did not reach the scene of the battle until after the fight. A little later he enlisted and was settled in Boston. But, as the army was not active at that time and he had much work to do on his farm to support his large family, his son Samuel, who was at that time only fifteen years old, took his place, giving the father freedom to do his work. While his son was thus acting as his substitute, the regiment was suddenly ordered to another field and the substitute went in place of the father, remaining in the army for some time and serving through several engagements.

The Billings family was also closely connected with the early history of our country. William Billings was a lieutenant in the Continental Army and his son was a captain in the Army of the Revolution. The son was also the first author and publisher of music in this country.

This family history, rooted in love of country, gave to Samuel Capen the elemental background of his life. He was a patriot by inheritance. A child of the Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay Colonies, he loved the very soil of New England, had a profound faith in her institutions and was an American of the best type.

His father belonged to the great middle class which has so largely contributed the men who have been most useful to our country, a class neither smothered by wealth nor blighted by poverty. It

has come to be recognized that one of the greatest evils of wealth is its deadly moral, mental and physical effect upon children. Many who have started in life without money and have accumulated large fortunes have maintained their creative powers and have not reached that unfortunate state where it is impossible to find joy in common things. But it is seldom that children born in wealth are sufficiently original to become leaders among men; seldom that they succeed in growing an unspoiled human nature which can find pleasure in small things or can enter into real sympathy with commonplace human needs.

Poverty is equally destructive of the highest manhood. There are a few who are able to rise above its deadening effects, a small company who seem born to be great and useful; but the atmosphere of poverty stunts the average life. To every child there comes a time when he craves expansion of personal tastes. He begins to find himself and to reach out for something that will enlarge his developing nature. If his atmosphere is bleak, if there is nothing to suggest romance, to encourage observation or to compel him to project himself into a world of new interests, he becomes dull and coarse, sometimes even bitter.

The young Samuel Capen came into a home where there were none of the luxuries of life. His father conducted a small business, bringing home each Saturday night enough money to provide food, clothes and shelter; but not a sufficient sum to provide those luxuries which were enjoyed by boys who lived not far away. Many times the

contrast must have seemed strange to this alert youth, especially as he craved books and education. But the advantage was not all on the side of those who lived in wealth. He had to create most of his joys; they were not thrust upon him, and, being compelled to originate his pleasures, he could never exhaust the supply. He found them in such commonplace things that in after life it was not difficult for him to discover the joy that was always near at hand. He was not dependent upon money, nor was he compelled to resort to abnormal excitement to satisfy his needs. Accustomed from the earliest years to rely upon his own powers, he knew how to find joy in that which to others had become not only uninteresting but irksome.

His father was a genial, charitable man who seldom spoke evil of any one, was always lenient in his judgments and saw the good rather than the evil that was in men. This latter was one of the most marked elements of character inherited by the son, an element that later became one of the secrets of his power. It was only on the rarest occasions that Mr. Capen ever spoke a severe word against even his worst enemies, and he saw the good in men long after others had lost faith. Indeed, there never came a time when he could not see good even in those who had made grievous moral blunders or when he ceased to labor for their restoration.

While the father was charitable, he was firm in his convictions and did not hesitate to obey his conscience, even though obedience meant loss of

material comforts. It was customary in those days for nearly all grocery stores to sell liquor, as it was also the habit for those who were supposed to be good Christians to drink it. But the temperance crusade, which was then sweeping over the country with power and was touching the consciences of thousands of men and women, touched the conscience of Samuel Childs Capen. He became convinced that no Christian man ought to sell that which destroys so many lives and brings unhappiness into so many homes. Hence he left the store where he had been compelled to sell intoxicants and, at a sacrifice, went to another place where groceries alone were kept.

It was a home of the Puritan conscience where the Sabbath was strictly, though not oppressively, observed, where card-playing, dancing and theater-going were classed as forms of worldiness, and where the reading was confined mostly to serious books, novels being excluded. It was not different from the homes of other Congregational families of that day but represented the conservative, somewhat austere life common to that time. While its atmosphere was not congenial to the cultivation of the arts and while it was perhaps narrow in its outlook upon the world, it did produce a high sense of duty, that "stern daughter of the voice of God," and gave to men a devotion to the great things of the spirit, which made them warriors upon whom the Church could depend in every crisis and who were destined to extend the power of the Church beyond anything it had ever attained in the new world.

Among these leaders Samuel Capen became one of the strongest. He was conspicuously a child of this Puritan atmosphere. He seldom read novels, not because he thought it was wrong to do so, but because he regarded it as a waste of valuable time that could be more advantageously devoted to other things. While to him every day was sacred, the Sabbath was a time to be carefully observed for the cultivation of the things of the spirit. He never played a game of cards, never danced, and never in his life did he go to the theater or the opera. His King's business required haste, and nothing was ever permitted to enter his life which would rob him of a second that ought to be devoted to this great service. In youth and old age there was but one thing he feared: he was afraid to do wrong. He had but one desire, and that was to do the will of God.

In this account of the forces which contributed to the making of the man we must not omit his frequent visits to the country and his love for the fields and hills. Probably the greatest danger confronting the boy or girl who is born in the city and is compelled to live there is the danger of growing into a life spoiled by affectation. City-bred youth are surrounded by a civilization that is artificial, both in its natural aspects and in its social and intellectual expressions. Men, by their language, dress and manners, pretend to be what they are not. They are away from reality and often fail to catch the mystery and poise, the calm and self-reliance of the great out-of-doors. They lack the earthly element, that which comes from

close association with smiling country and running brooks, with birds and dumb creatures, horses and cows, with barns and the upturned soil. They are easily shocked and count that which is common as unclean. Mr. Capen used to speak of Sharon, where he made frequent visits, as heaven. It was then not a suburb, a place of beautiful homes and posted lands, but a farming community. There he came in touch with things as they are. Instead of finding his recreation in stuffy halls where boys and girls were dressed as little prigs, where they were moulded after the pattern of the fashion book, taught to obliterate their personalities in stilted speech, called culture, and unnatural movements, called graceful, he spent his recreation among things that are natural and real, gaining the unconscious wisdom that belongs to things as they are and acquiring that naturalness which wins the trust of those who are sick of "the great town's harsh, heart-wearying roar."

He was a boy when Boston was famed for her great men. Within a few minutes' walk from his home was Summer Street, where lived Daniel Webster, Edward Everett, and the Grays, Gardners, Frothinghams, Bigelows, Lees, Jacksons, Higginsons and Cushings. In Winthrop Place lived Rufus Choate and not far away was George Bancroft, the historian. In this region were the Hunnewells and the Bowditches. Before he was far in his youth, Garrison and Wendell Phillips were challenging the attention of the public. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Whittier and Emerson were forming the first great period of American litera-

ture. When he walked up Summer Street Sunday morning, in company with his parents, on his way to the Central Congregational Church, he often met these great men going to divine worship. They were, to the aspiring boy, giants in the world of affairs, an inspiration, and created in his soul fires which could not be extinguished. In later life he often referred to these walks as one of the greatest forces in the making of his life. In his boyish dreams he, too, would be great, swaying men by his eloquence and entering into the battles for righteousness.

The influence of these great men upon the boy's life was indirect, inspirational, but there was one who was the intellectual father of many great men, Thomas Sherwin, Principal of the English High School, who was a very direct and powerful influence in moulding the life of this youth who came under his care. He was a man of unusual strength, dignified, standing for the best in every department of life, with the ability to inspire boys, and to call out that which is noblest. Samuel Capen first entered the Quincy Grammar School and then the English High, where he came under the influence of this great master. The teacher acted upon the boy as the first warm days of spring act upon the soil, causing the sleeping earth to leap into life. He became the boy's ideal of dignified and courteous manhood, an ideal which was doubtless reflected in after years in a life that was marked by dignity and courtesy above all other graces. In the High School Samuel Capen formed habits of methodical work, con-

centration, and appreciation of the best in education. He was graduated in 1858, winning the Franklin Medal for scholarship, and passed from the direct influence of the school system, which, in later years, he was to serve so effectively.

It was not only a period of great men, but a period of intense religious interest, out of which came the characters who have made the strong churches throughout New England. The brilliant intellect of Edwards A. Park of Andover was restating the old New England theology with a freshness of thought and style and a power of logic that brought new life into the churches; while Horace Bushnell of Hartford, Connecticut, with his poetic genius and the power of his personality and his eloquence, was precipitating controversy that quickened religious discussion and interest. Richard Storrs was just rising into fame as a pastor in Brooklyn, at the Church of the Pilgrims; and Henry Ward Beecher was speaking to the heart and conscience of America, as no preacher had done for half a century. Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin," was being published as a serial in the "National Era" of Washington. Great revivals were stirring the churches, first under Charles Finney and later under the early leadership of Dwight L. Moody. Several of the pulpits of Boston churches were filled by men who were not only intellectual giants, but were also afire with the revival spirit. So intense was this religious interest that the Congregational denomination gained more new churches and members in the next third of a century than it

had gained in the previous two hundred and fifty years. The growth in the enrollment of Sunday schools was even greater than had been the growth in the membership of the churches, while other religious work among young people was just beginning with a zeal that was to burst into a flame of enthusiasm, finding form in many young people's organizations that were to encircle the earth.

Samuel Capen was fortunate in being born into a Christian home, where God was recognized and where all things concerning the family were daily committed to the keeping of the Heavenly Father in family worship. His mother was a very devout woman, manifesting the graces of the Christian life, and having a profound faith in prayer, while the father was one of the old New England type who believed that a man should be a priest unto his household. In this atmosphere the young Samuel grew up a Christian, never having to pass through the agonies of violent conversion so common in those days.

Only second in importance to the influence of the home was the influence upon the young man of this new religious life that was permeating the community. It was sometimes exceedingly narrow in its outlook upon the world and often strained at the gnat while it swallowed the camel. It was largely lacking in a consciousness of any social mission, being much more engaged in preparing men for heaven than in equipping them for the struggle of bringing heaven on the earth. It had the virtue, however, of being intense, arousing

in men a deep devotion to the Church, demanding a part of their time for Christian service, and placing upon them a heavy sense of responsibility for the great missionary activities. It did not fail to touch this young spirit which was always sensitive to that which was best. There came to him very early a sense of responsibility for taking the message of the Kingdom to the whole earth, and when he first began to earn money he placed aside, each week, one tenth of his earnings to give to the Church, a habit which he carried through life, except that the proportion became much larger with the passing of the years.

There were no Young People's Societies in the churches in those days but, while he was still a youth, he formed the habit of speaking at the mid-week service. This was one of the most difficult things he had to do. Public speech was not easy for him and he was exceedingly timid. Slight of body and sensitive in spirit, the young man would rise, with knees trembling and heart beating fast, to utter a few words he had already carefully written and fixed in his memory, speaking not only because he thought it was a religious duty but also as a means of increasing his effectiveness in the community.

## CHAPTER III

## BUSINESS CAREER

Much of the inspiration of Mr. Capen's life came from the fact that he went into business with definite ideals. When he entered the carpet business he knew what he meant by success. There was not a moment, from the time he accepted a humble position for the small salary of seventy-five dollars a year, until his death, when he would not have left the firm with which he was associated had his business demanded any compromise with the best things of character or made it impossible for him to follow his vision. "There was never a moment when, in the deeper, wider currents of his mind, he was not moved by impulses greater than the acquisition of wealth; never a moment when this was not a secondary and subordinate object of his energies."

We find his ideals clearly set forth in an address he gave to a company of young men at the Boston Young Men's Christian Association. He enumerated five things, apart from which he thought any life would be a failure.

"The first condition I would mention is fidelity, by which I would mean, that kind of conscientiousness which performs the smallest details well; that faithfulness which sweeps under the mat and into the corners; that which lays a poor carpet ten miles out of Boston as thoroughly as a better

carpet on Beacon Street; that which tries as earnestly to sell an oil covering in the basement, as a Wilton on the main floor.

"The second condition I would name is earnestness. There is no chance or hope for the idle or indifferent; they will be left far behind in the race.

"The third condition is integrity, and by this I would mean not that larger form which refuses to tell a downright falsehood, but that higher form of conscientiousness which will not swerve a hair's breadth from the strictest truth whatever the temptation; the courage to lose a sale rather than do that which is mean or questionable; which cuts out every carpet as if the customer were watching the process; which does not take remnants off the shelf and charge them in for waste; which is faithful in sending all the odd pieces to the purchaser and never puts them aside to be made into a hassock by and by at some one's expense. I know men sometimes appear to prosper by overreaching and by fraud. But it is a temporary success only; they are soon known, shunned and despised. If a man will build up a business that will stand, one of its foundation stones must be integrity.

"The fourth condition I would name is purity of heart and life. In my judgment, I cannot emphasize this too strongly, for impurity is, next to intemperance, the greatest danger to young men. When I see a young man reading a novel of a doubtful name, when I see him go with those who delight in telling questionable stories, I feel that to continue in that path is his ruin. Shun such

men as you would the pestilence. I do not doubt that we shall agree on this point. You will pardon me if I go a step further; for I feel that I would not be true to my convictions if I did not add that I do not believe it is possible for any man to be true and pure and faithful in every respect without help from above. We need the personal help of a personal God. Here is where I believe we are most apt to fail; we miss the real object of a successful life. It is not the securing of wealth, or the acquiring of fame; it is the development of character."

Mr. Capen entered the employ of Wentworth and Bright in 1858, soon after graduating from the High School. Both physical health and the financial conditions of his parents made it impossible for him to follow his natural inclination. His disposition, as well as his environment, would have turned him toward the Christian ministry. In the Congregational churches, however, this high calling had been surrounded by the best traditions, requiring academic training, and no serious-minded man would have considered this work who could not have devoted four years to college life and three additional years to theological training. For the young Capen this was impossible and he entered the greater university of life, gaining from hard experience in the business world the elements which contributed so largely to his success in the larger field of politics, education and religion.

Mr. Capen entered the employ of Wentworth and Bright to learn the carpet business. He was

not thinking entirely of immediate returns, the thought in the minds of so many boys at the present time, but beginning as an office boy, on very low pay, he gave himself faithfully to learning everything about the trade. As a result of his faithfulness, his ambition and his hard work, he became a member of the firm within five years, and occupied an important place in the councils of the managers from the time when he became a stockholder.

Being one of the younger members of the firm, Mr. Capen was given charge of many of the details of the business. It was this training that gave him one of the most conspicuous characteristics of his life—his mastery of small things. As a successful business man he had every item of the business in his mind and this attention to details was carried through his life. Whatever he undertook he knew thoroughly. He was not satisfied with a general knowledge of a subject; he must know its work in detail. This was what made him so valuable a member of the School Board, such a successful president of the societies he served, and such a helpful member of his church. He carried all the work in which he was engaged in his mind and was able to give advise that was almost unerring, because he knew the work in its comprehensiveness.

No young man was ever more fortunate than Mr. Capen in the firm whose employ he entered. Both Mr. Wentworth and Mr. Bright were Christian men who carried their Christianity into their business. Their employees were treated in such a

manner that trades unions were not necessary for their protection and the buying and selling was always according to the highest standards of honor.

After the great Boston fire, Mr. Wentworth went out of business and the firm became known as Torrey, Bright and Capen, Mr. Torrey being a leader in the old Second Congregational Church of Dorchester, a man of the highest Christian integrity, and widely known in church circles.

One incident will serve to indicate the high standard by which the firm conducted its business. The custom officials had overcharged a large furniture house for some goods which had been imported. When they were correcting the mistake the bookkeeper of the firm asked the officials if their attention had ever been called to a case where they had undercharged an establishment. "Only once in the City of Boston," was the reply. "That was the firm of Torrey, Bright and Capen. We had sent them a bill for a sum much under the amount due the government. They called our attention to the mistake and paid what was due the customs."

The same high sense of honor characterized their relation to the men who worked for them. They demanded that their employees should be men of the best character. In the early days of the firm Mr. Capen had the habit of standing at the front door every Monday morning as the clerks came to their work. He greeted them with a cordial shake of the hand and some pleasant word. Seldom did he fail to express the hope that

they had attended some church service on the previous day and had enjoyed the privilege of hearing a good sermon. This was his quiet, unobtrusive way of keeping up the moral tone of the clerks and indicating in an inoffensive manner that the managers were interested in their *spiritual* as well as their material welfare.

When a worthy employee was taken sick his wages continued during his absence from the store and in more than one instance men with families were carried on the pay roll for months when they were unable, through physical infirmity, to be present at their work. The firm always acted upon the principle that they were trustees for the wellbeing of their employees and no man who had conducted himself in an honorable way ever had any reason to complain of the treatment he received.

One man, who was bookkeeper for years, was often called upon to work overtime. Not only did he receive just compensation for such work but Mr. Capen, as he passed the office on his way from the store at night, would usually insist that he be permitted to remain to help this man with his task. He created a sense of companionship in toil, assuring his men that he did not ask of them what he was not glad to do himself, and it was often only the most insistent refusal of his offered assistance that would compel the overworked employer to leave the office and go to his home for rest. It was not merely the attitude of an employer toward his help, but it created an atmos-

phere which made his store one where the men loved to toil.

When Mr. Capen ceased from active business and withdrew from the firm of Torrey, Bright and Capen, this bookkeeper left his place and sought employment elsewhere. When he was seeking for work in other establishments, a man, who had been in business for years in Boston, said to this bookkeeper, "You must not expect to find a place like the one you had with Torrey, Bright and Capen. You will not find it. In their treatment of help they stood in a class by themselves."

We cannot overemphasize the influence of such a business house upon the life of a young man just entering upon his career. The highest ideals of Church and state were incarnated in the older men with whom he associated and the young Samuel Capen found in their store congenial soil in which the seeds of his idealism could grow and flourish.

He had been in the firm only a few years when, from close confinement and hard work, he needed a rest. His employers sent him to Washington for a short vacation. Many young men would have spent their time in visiting places of interest about the capital. But Samuel Capen, who had been under the influence of the great men of Boston, both in Church and state, who had already tasted the delights of public debate, and who had ideals of civic and political betterment, spent nearly all his time in the galleries of the House of Representatives and the Senate, listening to the great orators who were then in Congress, learn-

ing from them what he could of the art of public speech, in which he always had great interest. No other incident in his career could reveal more clearly the fundamental trend of the young man's life and the attitude toward life which he maintained to the very last. While other men were seeking entertainment and amusement, he passed these that he might select those things only which ministered to his purpose and increased his value to society.

On December 8, 1869, Mr. Capen married Helen M. Warren and started one of the most ideal homes ever established by two Christian people, a home that was not only a source of constant happiness but also one which contributed very largely to his useful life.

He had been married, however, only two or three years when he was overtaken by a serious sickness. A nervous disorder affected his throat and hands. For a long time it was only with the greatest difficulty that he could talk. Added to this terrible affliction he had tuberculosis of the knee. For many months it seemed that he would never be able to do any more work and even his life was in serious danger. It was only the most rigid self-discipline that saved him. He was directed by the doctor to take breathing exercises and also to give regard to other matters concerning his health. Though they were taxing in the extreme, he followed them with a conscientiousness which characterized his life to the end and which finally restored his health.

It was during this sickness that there entered

his life a deepening consecration to the higher purposes of religion. Compelled to remain for months in absolute idleness, unable to talk to his friends except to a limited extent, he made the solemn resolve with his God that if his health was restored he would never shirk any work nor complain of any task that might be presented to him. It was an experience that affected his entire life, deepening his religious nature and sending him into the great needy world to be an untiring worker who was never heard to complain that he was too busy to undertake a new duty and who met every call from needy men as from God.

A short time before his marriage he had moved from Boston to Jamaica Plain. On the Sunday when he first attended the Central Congregational church there, the leader of the Men's Bible Class was absent and Mr. Capen was asked to teach the class. He was immediately persuaded to remain as its teacher and from that time until his death he continued in that position. Under his inspiring direction the class became famous throughout New England and was made the model after which many classes were formed in other communities.

Before his marriage he had been made deacon of that Church. It was a rare thing in those days to elect a young man to the diaconate. It was an office to be filled by the aged and godly elders who had supposedly experienced great things in the realm of religion. It was a tribute to this young man's power of leadership, as well as to the confidence men had in his spiritual life, that he was placed in this exalted office.

But he had not been without training to fit him for the place. He had been a successful teacher for several years in the Old Colony Mission School and, even better in view of this new office, he had been one of a group of young men who had organized themselves in the old Central Church of Boston for Christian service. They met each week to discuss religious questions and also topics concerning good citizenship. It was in this society that Mr. Capen had cultivated the power of public speech, an ability to express himself clearly and forcibly and to extend his influence through the medium of public utterance. Though he did not enter conspicuously into public life until he was over forty years of age, he was through all those early years preparing himself in the consecrated atmosphere of a Christian business house and in every possible opportunity of Christian activity for the high privileges which were to be offered him later for service to the Church, the city and the state.

## CHAPTER IV

## PRESIDENT OF THE CONGREGATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL AND PUBLISHING SOCIETY

Preceding the year 1880 the missionary work of the Congregational Sunday School and Publishing Society had been insignificant. A few missionaries were employed as early as 1852 in New York and in the central western states, but the work was of very small proportions, and at the opening of the Civil War it was practically abandoned. Rev. Asa Bullard was Agent and Secretary of the Sunday School Society for more than fifty years beginning in 1834. His work was confined largely to New England, although he did some work in the West, but this latter went for the most part to build up Presbyterian churches.

In 1874 the National Council of Congregational Churches recommended that the missionary Sunday school work be transferred to the Home Missionary Society. This was done in 1876. The action was taken against the judgment of many of the officers of both Societies and it proved to be a disastrous act to the denomination. It nearly destroyed the Sunday school missionary work, and if it had been allowed to stand, it would have severely crippled the denomination.

The receipts for Sunday school work that were transferred to the Home Missionary Society were

very small and those of the Publishing Society, as a result of the action, fell from $12,224 in 1873 to $1,464 in 1879. Shorn of what little missionary work it had done, the Society had small hold upon the denomination, and that little was almost wholly in New England.

In 1880, however, a few Sunday school workers began to agitate the question why Congregationalists could not have a Sunday school leader, filling some such position as that held by Dr. Vincent in the Methodist Church, or by Dr. Worden in the Presbyterian. The State Association of Illinois, and some other bodies, passed resolutions recommending such action and sent them to the Society in Boston.

Whenever there is a great crisis in the nation or in the Christian organization, God has a leader ready for the hour. The case of this Society was no exception. A man was needed who had great ability, was fertile in resources, courageous, and not only enthusiastic himself, but capable of arousing enthusiasm in others. Such a man was found in the person of Rev. A. E. Dunning, who became Secretary of the Society on January 1, 1881.

It is necessary to recount some of the difficulties confronted by Dr. Dunning in order to understand the great work accomplished by Mr. Capen for this organization. The first difficulty encountered was apathy and indifference. Within a year of the time when Dr. Dunning was appointed, he secured, through the proper officers, an opportunity to speak before the Massachusetts State Associa-

tion. When it became time for him to speak a gentleman arose and asked, "Who is Mr. Dunning and what is the Sunday School Society?" He was not allowed to proceed until Dr. Quint, the moderator, in a quaint way, had answered the question. And this was in Massachusetts but little over thirty years ago.

The second difficulty was opposition from without. The moment Mr. Dunning began vigorously to promote missionary work he was bitterly opposed by other interests. One of the great denominational leaders felt that he would, if allowed to go on, secure funds that he himself wanted for another Society, and he did everything in his power to prevent Dr. Dunning from securing a hearing before the State Associations. This leader was indorsed in this attempt by many whom he influenced. Nor was the organization represented by this opponent the only one determined to crush the life out of this Sunday school movement. The opposition often took the form of petty attacks. In Illinois a place had been given Dr. Dunning to present the cause of the Sunday School Society at the State Association, but a plan was made to prevent him from speaking. The opposition was severe, but, to his credit be it said, the moderator was determined there should be fair play. He decided that Dr. Dunning should be heard and he carried the Association with him. A year or two later, in the same state, a most bitter attack was made against the Secretary personally and against the Society.

The third difficulty was opposition within the Society. A majority of the Board of Directors did not favor the plan of raising money for sending out Sunday school missionaries. They wanted what little money was given put into the publishing work. The result of this opposition was practically a revolution in the management of the Society, the retirement of several of the old directors, and the appointment of men who were more interested in pioneer Sunday school work.

The nominal capital of the Society at this time was $35,127 but most of this was afterward charged off to profit and loss. Unless very wise management and strong personalities could be secured it was evident that the Society could not continue its work.

With these almost insuperable difficulties before him, Dr. Dunning, seeing signs of promise in one of Boston's young merchants, conceived the idea that if he could persuade him to become president of the Society he could save it from ruin and make it one of the strong organizations of the Congregational Churches. He wrote a letter to Mr. Capen, urging upon him the reasons why he should give his services to this difficult undertaking. The first letter received a negative answer, but Dr. Dunning's perseverance finally prevailed and he succeeded not only in securing a leader who was to be one of the greatest factors in reorganizing this Society but also in bringing to the attention of the churches a man who was to become one of the most useful men of his generation. For this act, quite

as much as for his excellent work as secretary of the Society and later as editor of the "Congregationalist," the churches are under great obligation to Dr. Dunning.

Mr. Capen was elected president on May 30, 1882, on the fiftieth anniversary of the Society. He accepted his duties in no perfunctory way but entered with deep devotion into every department of the work. Indeed, this was one of the characteristics of all his public activity. He would never accept any office to be a figurehead, perhaps ornamental, but useless as far as real service was concerned. He felt the responsibility of making the entire denomination realize the importance of the Sunday School Society, and he threw himself with untiring zeal into the task of reorganization.

His first work was in securing funds to save the Society from bankruptcy and to give it a working capital. He secured three subscriptions of $5000 a year for three years which gave the society a working capital to carry forward its activities, a contribution obtained by reason of the confidence men had in his leadership.

The second important work done by Mr. Capen was the reorganization of the Board of Directors. One of the conditions made before he would accept the office was that he should have the right to name six business men as members of this Board. The request was granted and several leading clergymen, together with six of our ablest laymen, who had the confidence of all the churches, were elected. They included strong ministers such as Doctors Alexander McKenzie, Mortimer

Blake, Joshua Wellman, Charles B. Rice, B. Franklin Hamilton, J. T. Duryea, George M. Boynton, Robert R. Meredith, Michael Burnham and such laymen as Alpheus Hardy, William H. Wardwell, Charles A. Richardson, Joshua Davis and E. C. Stanwood.

The result of this business reorganization cannot be better stated than in Mr. Capen's words in an address given in Hartford in 1899. "The nominal capital in 1882 was $35,127, much of which was charged off subsequently to profit and loss. Considerable of this capital was in stereotype plate, etc., of small value. If everything had been marked down rigidly, as has been the policy of later years, the real capital would have been much less. Five thousand dollars of it had been transferred from another fund and put into the working capital, which in later years was restored. New energy was put into the business; earnest efforts were made to extend it; the new missionaries employed were interested to press our literature upon the schools; great care was shown in the character of the books we published; stores which had frequently refused to look at our publications were now able to give our books a place upon their shelves, and there was a new condition of things everywhere. The capital March 1, 1899, is $125,490, all of which, except about $19,000 raised in 1883 and 1884 for new capital, has come from the profits of its business. The circulation of our lessons helps about twenty years ago was less than 50,000; last year they were 644,000."

Even more important gains were made in some

directions than would seem to be indicated by the above figures. The business prosperity of the Society warranted a vote, taken in 1882, that one-half of all the expenses of the Secretary should be paid by the business department. While the chief work of the Secretary was, of course, with the missionary department, yet he did not have, under its rules, large responsibility for its publications. Its missionaries were more or less agents to push its business and it seemed just, therefore, that the business should pay one-half of the Secretary's salary and expenses. The President and some of the directors wanted the time to come when the capital of the Society would reach such an amount that they could give all their surplus profit each year to the missionary department, or, at least, pay all the expenses of the administration of the Boston office. To some extent their desire was attained and they gave out of this surplus amounts varying from $2500 to $5000 a year for several consecutive years. This made it possible for them to make a stronger appeal to their constituency, as men throughout the denomination were made to feel that the Society was not only a business but a great missionary enterprise.

Under the new administration there was also an extension of missionary work. The first Sunday school missionary began work in December, 1882. Since that time the missionaries of this organization have covered every western state and some of the southern states. Before Mr. Capen resigned the Society had reached a point where, on an average, twenty-five missionaries

were kept in the field all the year, and in some months from thirty-five to forty. One of these missionaries led over five hundred persons into the Church. Between 1883 and 1899 the Society organized over seven thousand Sunday schools, into which were gathered at the time of their organization over three hundred thousand people. In 1882 their workers planted and aided only four hundred and twelve schools. In the nineties they planted each year, on an average, about five hundred new schools and assisted about one thousand more, most of which, perhaps the majority, would have died without this aid. From the years 1885 to 1895 seven hundred and sixty of these Sunday schools grew into churches, and more than two thousand of the Congregational churches were aided by this Society in their Sunday school work. In other words, about one-third of the Congregational churches of the United States have been aided by this organization and one-tenth have grown directly out of its work. Of the one hundred and forty new churches reported in the year book for 1898, thirty-seven were started in Sunday schools organized by these missionaries, sixteen others were aided from their beginning, and thirteen more were helped during the year: that is, more than one-fourth were organized from beginnings made by this Society and nearly one-half were helped by it. Of the eighty-nine new churches reported in the year book for 1899, thirty grew from Sunday schools planted by these missionaries and eighteen more were aided by the Society at some time during their history. Such

figures show what a large part this Society, under its new direction, played in the development of the Congregational churches.

Probably one of the most far-reaching steps taken by the Society under its new management was the calling of a secretary to edit the Sunday School Lesson Helps. Before 1885 the preparation of the Lesson Helps and other literature for Sunday school work had been done by special arrangement with individuals. Doctors Alexander McKenzie, William H. Wilcox, C. B. Rice, D. N. Beach and R. R. Meredith had prepared Helps for teachers and schools. In May of that year, however, Mr. M. C. Hazard was called from the position of Secretary of the Western Sunday School Society to remove to the Boston office and become editor in charge of the literature of this new department. How greatly this added to the value of these publications was indicated by their increasing circulation. Previous to this time the Congregational churches had felt no obligation to secure their literature from denominational headquarters, but this new departure was so successful that the Congregational churches everywhere turned, in increasing numbers, to their own Publishing Society for the source of their supplies; until, today it is only the exceptional church that seeks the outside publisher.

It is difficult for the younger men of the Congregational churches, who see the Congregational Sunday School and Publishing Society in such a flourishing condition, one of the strongest and most influential organizations of their denomina-

tion, to realize what work has been done to give it the place it occupies today. This is due first of all to the personalities of Dr. Dunning and Mr. Capen and to the strong men they gathered about them, but also to the far-sighted business policy they adopted.

It is due largely to the fact that they agreed that whatever work was undertaken by the Society should be made, so far as possible, permanent. They recognized that the Church is a divine institution and that it was their mission to plant Sunday schools where, first under the care of their Society, and later under the care of the Home Missionary Society, they should grow into permanent churches. They believed that the Sunday school was father of the church. The result of the years justified their faith and it was a pleasure to them, after their years of anxious and untiring work, to have one of the largest denominations in a great assembly, a few years ago, declare that the missionary work of the Congregational Sunday School Society was the best in the country.

While this policy of doing permanent work was the fundamental principle, they also recognized the call to enter fields where there could be no probability of such results. As a consequence, they planted nearly one thousand Sunday schools where there was no other religious work. Some of their schools were of very slow growth and they knew some would perish, but they believed it was their mission to let children in out-of-the-way places hear the message of the Christ.

They tried to recognize the importance of time in their work. It makes an infinite difference to a community whether the Sunday school or the saloon gets the first hold upon the community. They tried, therefore, to keep their men at the front, doing the hard work of pioneers, and the thrilling stories of some of their missionaries, fighting the forces of iniquity which tried to capture the communities in which they worked, afford some of the most interesting reading of our American history.

They also felt the importance of circulating the best religious literature as an antidote to the vile stuff that was circulated everywhere. What this meant to the dwellers on the prairie and in the mining camps only eternity alone can reveal.

Finally they adopted the settled policy never to incur a debt. They felt that the limit of their responsibility ceased with the money given them, and that it was their duty so to administer the trust as to take no chances of incurring a debt. They believed that a society, as well as an individual, should live within its income. As a result of this policy they established a legacy fund. In this particular organization this meant that all legacies left to the Society, instead of being spent in one year, should cover a period of three years, one-third being spent each year. Such a fund gave the Society a little reserve at all times and helped toward steadiness in work. As a consequence they made a record that no missionary of the Society ever waited for his salary for one hour from lack of funds. The men on the field

were in hearty and cordial sympathy with the home office; they were enthusiastic in their work; they were devoted and true; and this was due partly to the knowledge that there should never be any delay in the payments of their salaries.

It has been necessary to review somewhat at length this history of the Sunday School and Publishing Society, as it is so intimately connected with the life and development of Mr. Capen. It was here in a sense that he found himself, that he had the opportunity for the expression of his peculiar talents, and it was through this organization that he received his introduction to the religious world.

It is probably true that few men were more eagerly sought to make addresses for all sorts of gatherings—religious, social and civic—than this Christian layman, and there were few whose words were more carefully considered. He never developed into a polished orator, like some men who have had the benefit of the schools, and his public utterances were never marked by wide learning or great scholarship. It is not probable that they will be read by succeeding generations or even preserved in a single volume. Yet the utterances of few men received such wide circulation among Christian laymen of America as did the spoken and printed words of this man. His address upon peace, delivered before the American Board in Portland and printed by the World Peace Foundation, has been called for more frequently and given wider circulation than any pamphlet they ever printed. Nearly all of his im-

portant speeches were published and were read not only by the laymen of his own denomination but by Christian and social workers throughout the country.

It was while he was President of the Sunday School and Publishing Society that Mr. Capen developed this art which made him so useful to the religious and social world. Dr. Dunning, as Secretary of this Society, was crowded with more work than it was possible for one man to do. There was need of arousing interest among the churches and presenting the work of the Society, a need which far exceeded the powers of a single secretary. Mr. Capen saw this open door and when he saw an opportunity he accepted it. He began by addressing Sunday schools, often using some object which would catch the attention of the children and then drawing lessons from it, and again making a simple but earnest appeal to a group of young people. But all who heard him saw great possibilities and in a little while he was sought by churches everywhere and soon developed into an exceedingly effective speaker.

At first these addresses were always written out and, like the first efforts of many men, they were cumbered with an over-abundance of words and lacked form. Many times he would read them to Dr. Dunning for criticism and suggestion, and under this kindly criticism he quickly came to see his faults, and he developed that concise, pointed form of speech which made him one of the most effective ten-minute speakers this generation has produced.

The theory he adopted for himself is stated in an address he gave to a body of ministers: "Many ministers fail, I think, in not making the points of the sermon definite. Whatever else you do, make them clear and sharp. I believe this is extremely important. I listened a few months ago to an address from a doctor of divinity who stands high in his profession. After listening about thirty-five minutes, a clergyman with whom I had a little acquaintance, sitting near, touched my shoulder and said: 'Do you know what he is talking about?' Another person near said: 'That was just my thought.' It may have been noticed that Dr. William Taylor in his sermons usually makes just three headings and I have another very able preacher in mind who told me that he had adopted that rule. Their points are made so direct that everyone feels their power." He cut from his addresses all superfluous words, arranged his material so clearly that no one could fail to grasp the meaning and by the power of his intense earnestness drove his thoughts into the minds and hearts of his hearers.

Indeed some men thought his most effective speeches were his short ones, where he seized one or two outstanding principles and, by his peculiar grace and power, made them vital to the lives of those who listened. Many large assemblies over which he presided were lifted at the very beginning of their sessions to a high plane of moral and spiritual enthusiasm by one of his brief introductory addresses, a plane which they were able to maintain to the very closing hour,

when he would deliver another short address, which would seem to clinch everything that had been said and done.

It was not without significance that he devoted a large part of his life to work among children, first in the Sunday schools, then in the Society of which he was President, and later on the School Committee of Boston. It was while he was President of the Publishing Society that the importance of the work for the young grew upon him. In one of his addresses he said: "Many living can remember how in their early days the young were kept back in everything which looked toward active Christian work. There has just been called home one of the noblest men of the ministry, Dr. Brand, of Oberlin. When he became a Christian in the church in Maine where he attended, there was but one male member in the church under thirty years of age. Even when this Sunday School Society was reconstructed, less than twenty years ago, it was regarded as a rather small work compared with that of some of the other societies. But that day, thank God, is gone. We live in the children's age, and we have learned that to shape and mould the boy of five is the easiest and surest way to hold the man of twenty-five. Work for the children represents the greatest economy of force."

One thing which he said often to the churches cannot be repeated too frequently. He was a strong believer in influencing little children to unite with the Christian Church and he was fond of saying: "Act as though you expected the little ones to come to Christ at once. There has been

very much of unbelief in the past about little children becoming Christians. Thank God, that feeling is passing away! Christ wants the little ones at first, before sin has made a stronghold of their souls. Then let them feel that this expectation is of the first importance, more important than all other things put together; that money, or gain, or dress, or station, are nothing in comparison. The child with its keen instinct will readily detect what the parent wants of it above all else. To the little one none is so great or strong as the father, or so loving and beautiful as the mother. Let that power be uniformly exerted in one direction and it will be irresistible."

It was during this period of his work that his Men's Bible Class in the Central Church in Jamaica Plain became very widely known, and was studied by hundreds of people interested in the new movement among the churches of organizing the men of the parish for Bible study. Mr. Capen often quoted in public speech the familiar saying: "If you want to hold the boys in Sunday school build a wall of men so high that they cannot jump over it." He was a profound believer in this truth, and for years he was one of the most successful teachers of a large men's class that this country has produced. The secret of his success may be found in ten principles which he adopted for his own work and which, he believed, were the foundation for any successful worker.

"(1) Always be present unless detained by some important reason, a reason that your class will feel is a good one. (2) I try to keep very

clearly in mind the great aim of Bible class teaching; namely, to lead all to Jesus Christ and then to inspire them with the thought of noble service for him. (3) I try to be faithful in preparation, remembering not only the beautiful responsibility, but also the unspeakable privilege, of moulding young men for the life that now is and for that which is to come. I think that every layman should spend at least five hours in preparation. (4) I write out all the questions and the headings of what I wish to say. There is nothing more demoralizing to a class of bright young men than for the teacher to be fumbling around to find the place. They want things quick, sharp, prompt. (5) I try never to do the same thing twice alike. It adds greatly to have variety. (6) As a part of this plan, I have no regular order of asking questions. I sometimes begin in one part of the class and sometimes in another. In going around, if a hard question comes to one whom you feel may not be able to answer it, and who will be thereby embarrassed, it is easy enough to put in another question, or to ask the difficult question of all, and see how many answers you can get; or 'plump it' at some one you know will be glad to answer, as if you had been saving it for him all the lesson. (7) Be cheerful. A long-faced Christian, if such a term is not a contradiction, ought never to be asked to teach a Bible class. I do not believe that there are either icebergs or fogs in heaven, and there is no place for them, personified, in the Sunday school. The person who goes through life in a 'hang-dog way,' as though he was apologizing

to the Almighty for being in the world at all, cannot teach young men. (8) Be earnest. If there is anything that ought to arouse all that is in us, it is the thought of moulding human souls by the presentation of the gospel. (9) Remember, in the last five minutes, to gather up and enforce the central and spiritual thoughts of the lesson. Let everything lead up to this; and allow nothing to prevent the final impression, the last thought, from being the one you would be glad to leave if, when you gather the next Sabbath, there should be a vacant chair, and the one who sat there a week before should have gone. (10) The most important duty of every successful teacher is personal work. We must make our scholars feel at once that we are personal friends, interested in their business, in their studies, in their amusements, in all that interests them. I usually call without delay upon a new scholar. If he be not a Christian, as soon as I feel that I have a little hold upon him, I invite him to my own house and talk freely and frankly upon personal religion."

The value of these rules cannot find better justification than the results they produced. Not only did he gather about him a large company of men who, through his teaching and personal influence, became the spiritual teachers and leaders in his church, but scores went out to other churches, scattered all over this country, to become centers of power. He always carried with him a complete list of the membership of this class and no day passed when he did not pray for each one by name.

He considered himself responsible for the spiritual welfare of this little flock, and there was not one in the group with whom he did not at some time talk on the subject of personal religion, making a definite effort to bring him to a decision to serve Jesus Christ, and to unite with the Church. Even when he was on his last journey around the world, crowded by engagements, busy making addresses, visiting mission stations, writing letters and making notes, he not only held to his practice of praying for each member every day, but also wrote a long letter to be read to the class at each weekly meeting. Through these years of fidelity as a teacher and leader of his class, he verily attained an immortality by living over again in lives made better by his presence. While his interest was in the children, it was equally vital in the men, and all during his presidency of the Sunday School Society he was a great power, both through public addresses and personal example, in encouraging the organization of men's classes throughout the country.

It was during this period that men became conscious of his intense religious earnestness, the element more than any other which was the secret of his power. His life, as well as his words, was essentially an appeal to men for greater loyalty to Jesus Christ. Here is one out of many passages from his addresses revealing the intense earnestness of the man: "While there has been so much progress made, and while the Sunday school work of our denomination and of others has given such splendid results, let us not forget the stupendous

task yet remaining to be done. With over ten millions in Sunday school, there is another ten millions of school age outside. And one of the saddest parts of it all is that of these millions many cannot get a chance to go if they would. There are hundreds of places in our country where, as yet, the name of Jesus Christ is not taught in Sunday school or church. And these places give such splendid results when the Sunday school missionary does come. The people are so often hungry for the gospel. A single illustration: It is of a mining town with over four thousand people and forty-seven saloons, with no Sunday school. One of our missionaries a short time ago was instrumental in planting a school which, in a few months' time, had three hundred scholars; a church was organized which now has over two hundred members, thirty-six being added last year at a single communion. Compare this with a report which came back recently to us from an inquiry we made in a certain place. I quote literally: 'No school, no church, no missionary, no religion.' Such a report, which could be duplicated so often, ought to inspire our churches with larger consecration and greater liberality.''

Always thankful for the great work that had been accomplished, he saw greater work to be done. Nothing could discourage him. He was essentially a crusader, not content until there should be a Sunday school and church upon every hill and in every valley from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Men caught his spirit. Young men followed

the noble commander, and the result was not only a Society reorganized on its business side but a Society filled with a new spirit, and made a great factor in our religious life.

## CHAPTER V

## THE BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Mr. Capen had become well known in the Congregational churches through his connection with the Sunday School Society and in Boston through his active interest in municipal reforms. When the schools of Boston needed the touch of a strong guiding hand, the leadership of some one who could free them from the control of the politician and of other forces which were trying to cripple them, the citizens of the old Puritan city turned to Mr. Capen as a man of the type who could bring them to the standard worthy of the traditions of the past. He was elected to the School Board in 1888 and immediately threw all the power of his consecrated personality into these needed reforms.

The first urgent work before the School Committee of Boston in 1888 was the erection of new buildings, to accommodate the children. The old City of the Puritans had always given special attention to the education of her young. The free church and the free school had been her pride and she had been a leader in providing the best equipment that skill and money could obtain. Between 1875 and 1887 she had built thirteen primary schools and seventeen grammar schools. Then certain interests that had been opposed to the public school system, but had not been successful

in fighting it openly, gained secret control of the political machinery of the city and, instead of open opposition, used indirect methods of strangling this favorite child of our free institutions. Working through the mayor and City Council they succeeded in withholding all appropriations of money for school buildings, apparently hoping to stop all building until the population should so outgrow the accommodations that there would be an added argument for the need of the parochial and private school.

The city of Chicago built in the old city proper, between 1886 and 1890, nineteen grammar and primary school buildings, at a total cost of $1,129,047. During the same period the city of Brooklyn erected nineteen new school buildings, while in Boston, with a rapidly increasing population, only one new building was added. As a result schools were overcrowded and vacant stores and rooms were rented to supply temporary needs.

The situation in one school of the Dorchester district may serve as an illustration of what was the condition in several school districts at that time. The building was inadequate for the large number of children, so that rooms outside of the school had to be rented. One of the grades was placed in the basement of a church. Two rooms were rented in rickety tenements, so old that in the winter months the children could look through the cracks in the walls, rooms that could not be adequately heated and were dark and in every way unsuited to the needs of school work. Still another group of the pupils was placed in an old

store, not only unfitted for school work but also used as a source of graft by the politicians. Apart from the disadvantage of scattering the pupils over such a wide territory, with the loss of school spirit, was the more serious fact that the equipment would have been a disgrace to even a back-country school district. Yet there were districts in the city of Boston that were worse than this one.

With this condition existing in the city, whose boast had been in her educational institutions, Mr. Capen was elected to the School Committee and was made chairman of the sub-committee on school buildings. Report was soon made to the City Council concerning the conditions confronting the Committee, calling attention not only to the way in which Boston was failing to meet her present needs but also to the fact that by withholding her funds she was failing to provide adequately for the future. "To illustrate, there is a portion of our city very rapidly filling up at the present time, where in two or three years there will be need of both a new grammar and a new primary school. The land could have been bought last winter for ten cents a foot. We ought to have been in a position to purchase it; for, when we come to buy it, it will have appreciated so much that the city will probably pay two or three times the above price for it. It seems unnecessary to say that we ought not to be so far behind with the needs of today that we cannot provide for the certain needs of tomorrow."

The chairman of the Building Committee

even suggested to the honorable Council that if the matter of erecting commodious, well-lighted and well-ventilated buildings should be submitted to popular vote, the citizens almost unanimously would give their voice in favor of this imperative call for increased school accommodations.

But, in spite of all argument, the mayor and the City Council could not be moved. Something had effectively blocked the wheels of progress. What it was, many had their suspicions, but none could prove. There was money for the politicians but a very inadequate amount for the training of the children in the schools.

When it was evident that the money could not be secured and that the city machinery was in the hands of some unseen power opposed to the public school system, Mr. Capen carried the cause into the public press of Boston. Going in person to the editor of the "Boston Transcript," he secured not only his sympathy but his co-operation, and there began the open controversy through the columns of that paper between Mr. Capen, representing the School Committee, and some one representing the mayor and Council, who signed his name, "A Boston School Boy." Under that name the power fighting the schools was hidden and no one could draw the enemy into the open.

For several weeks the controversy continued, Mr. Capen revealing to the public with great skill the actual state of Boston's schools, creating wide interest throughout the city, and making a public sentiment that could no longer be resisted.

"The plain truth is," said an editorial in the

"Transcript," "and it may as well be plainly spoken: Boston's school children would not have to wait for decent and healthful accommodations if the Boston schools had in their employ an army of ward politicians and political strikers. There is a limit to the defiance which can be safely put upon intelligent public sentiment. There is a wide and widening, a deep and deepening demand for more schoolhouses. Whether City Hall knows it or not, the slates of the school children are entitled to more consideration as well as the slates of the politicians. If no desk room is provided for the former slates, it is not unlikely that some of the latter will be shattered in consequence."

As a result of this agitation legislation was secured that enabled the School Committee to obtain funds. The politician and the secret power were completely routed and the Committee immediately formed plans for building many of the finest schoolhouses of which any city can boast. The disgraceful conditions were overcome and with adequate equipment Boston started on a new era in her educational history.

The second great achievement of the School Committee, when Mr. Capen was one of its most influential members, was the introduction into the Boston schools of manual training, an element in the education of the child that had its strong advocates but no less its opponents. Mr. Capen's was largely the voice that was to speak to the public on this new venture, and now that manual training has become a part of our educational system, it is interesting to recall the reasons which were

then advanced in its favor. In an appeal made through the "Boston Transcript" for a school devoted to mechanical training, Mr. Capen advanced these arguments:

"First, we ask it as an act of justice to a large class of boys in our public schools. We all point with pride to our Latin School with its splendid record of more than two hundred and fifty years in fitting boys for professions. We have equal satisfaction with our high schools, fitting for the best places in mercantile life. But how about the boys who are to enter the industrial world? Are they not entitled to an equal chance? Should they not have, at the public expense, provision for such higher education as will fit them for advancement in their chosen calling? We do not believe that it is right for this city any longer to make such a discrimination.

"Second, such schools are a great moral force in any community. It has been proved again and again that the best way, often the only way, to arouse the intellectual faculties of some boys is through their hands. They do not at first care for books. They are listless, heedless, indifferent. They are discouraged by repeated failures, and ready for mischief of every sort. But when they are put before the bench and the anvil, another set of faculties is aroused; they begin to take pride in their work. In the classroom they dawdle over the book, and all the entreaty of the teacher has no effect. But when they stand before the anvil, and the red-hot iron must be moulded that instant or not at all, then the lesson as to the im-

portance and value of time is driven home with resistless power. So at the carpenter's bench, with the drawings they have made, they learn the necessity of accuracy and precision. The different parts must be fitted together. No sham will pass, and they have learned a lesson in truth. Furthermore, their work is done in the sight of all; they cannot carry it home and have it worked out by some older brother; and they learn self-reliance and true manliness. These faculties and others that might be named are the very basis of character. This is not theorizing; it is the universal result everywhere.

"Third, we need this school to properly complete the whole plan of manual training in our school system. What is done in our elementary schools fails in its full fruitage and value without this. The kindergarten system is being generally adopted all through the city. The little child is here taught to think, to observe carefully, to be persevering, his thinking and his efforts being wrought out with his fingers. It has been proved that the child who has been a year in the kindergarten has his faculties so much quickened that it is practically a year in advance when it enters the primary school over those who have not had this training. Going on from this first step, within the past year, provision has been made in the course of study to teach the principles and lay the foundation of manual training itself in all our primary schools, and primary teachers are being instructed to this end. In some of our grammar schools the boys are being taught the use of tools,

and the system is to be introduced into them all as rapidly as possible. But it can never be complete without this high school. It has been demonstrated again and again, all over the country, that the college and the seminary are necessary to lift to a higher plane the common school and make it more efficient. When in a community there is no higher education the common school is usually of a very inferior order. The same principle is true in the matter of manual training. We need the school of the higher grade to give completeness to the whole system, and give enthusiasm and interest in it among our pupils."

Mr. Capen with his keen moral insight into our social order saw even a deeper need for this type of education than is advanced in the "Transcript" article. Speaking before the School Committee he said: "One of the greatest dangers to our nation comes through class distinctions and the erroneous idea that those who labor with their hands are not quite so high in the social scale as those whose labor is more largely of the brain. Manual training in our schools is doing much to correct this false notion in our children before it becomes permanently fixed. The cultivated teacher, with the children of the rich and the poor dressed alike in the garb of a toiler, and working together with their hands, serves to impress the truth that manual labor is honorable."

As a result of this continued agitation, Mr. Capen, co-operating with the faithful efforts of other men equally interested, introduced manual training not only in our grammar schools, but

there came that crowning achievement of mechanical education, the establishment of the Mechanic Arts High School. In 1891 the City Council appropriated one hundred thousand dollars for the building of this School and the School Committee in the same year began to shape the course of study in the elementary schools with this advanced course in mind, so that the boys who intended to follow the industrial pursuits should be trained in the best way to avail themselves of this new opportunity. Cooking and sewing for girls was introduced in the grammar schools and woodwork for boys. Mr. Capen was Chairman of the Committee and wrote the report, outlining a complete course of study which was to launch Boston schools in this new enterprise and to some extent to revolutionize our educational ideals.

There was still one class of children for whom adequate provision had not been made, those who had never been taught to obey in the home and were growing in idleness and defiance of authority. To illustrate the type: In one school district was a boy whose mother was dead, whose father was rarely at home, his occupation being to entice strangers from the country into gambling dens where they were robbed and he took half of the profit. This boy attempted to defy the teacher, to demoralize the whole room when he was present and to absent himself from the school when it pleased him. He was not a criminal but he would soon become one.

For such boys there was a truant school in Boston Harbor or the reform schools, but many

judges would not send boys to those schools because they knew that in contact with crime they would be ruined. Hence such boys were often allowed to remain in the schools, continuing in defiance of restraint, until they took the first step in crime, when they were sent away to be kept with other criminals and this meant, as a rule, that they were only to be confirmed in their crime.

Mr. Capen, as chairman of the appropriation committee, had the satisfaction of presenting an order, which was adopted by the School Committee, "that the City Council be requested to appropriate one hundred and fifty thousand dollars for land and buildings for a parental school." It was to be "a school to prevent crime, not one to cure it," to take the boy before he became a criminal and help him to form a character and strengthen his will.

In characteristic ways, Mr. Capen had been very careful to prepare public opinion on this matter before asking for the appropriation. Through public utterances and articles for the press, he had fully acquainted the public with the need of such a school and the ideal that was to dominate it. This was one secret of his success. He never ran ahead of public opinion, but took time to prepare it for the work he wished to accomplish. If the matter in hand concerned only a committee, and it was a question on which there was difference of opinion, he saw the members of the committee, made them familiar with his point of view and knew how they were to vote before they came to their meeting. If it was a matter

that affected the public, he took time to educate them, using the press freely, so that they not only saw a need but became advocates of the principle. All his great causes were won by personal interviews, before his committees ever came together. He sufficiently educated the public so that when he launched his enterprises it was ready for them.

Through a long series of utterances the public was prepared for this new step in the treatment of degeneracy and the City Council granted the request, thus providing Boston with a system of schools that should minister to every class of children.

One of the most difficult tasks in a large city is to keep the hand of the politician from the public school. With the large number of appointments to be made and the large expenditures of money, this is one of the fields he most covets for his selfish purposes.

In Boston for years the appointment of janitors was one of the fields where the politician had been most active, and while there were many able men in this department of her service there were also a large number of incompetents, who had received their appointments through political influence rather than on the ground of fitness.

Mr. Capen, keenly sensitive to the evils of this system, was one of the leaders who influenced the General Court to pass legislation providing that all janitors having a salary of over three hundred dollars a year should before being qualified, first be examined and certified by the Civil Service

Commissioner. The practical working out of this law has fully justified all that its friends claimed for it from the beginning. Vacancies are filled, whenever they occur, either by the promotion of the best men already in the service, or by the appointment of those who have the highest rank in the competitive list. The effect has been to relieve the School Committee of all pressure of appointments to be made for political or other selfish reasons and the whole service has been placed upon that higher plane where fitness and not favoritism is the test of all appointments.

Probably one of the most effective works with which Mr. Capen was directly concerned in connection with the educational system of Boston was the placing of teachers upon tenure of office. It had been the custom to elect teachers every year; and not only was the teacher always uncertain about his term of service, but many times injustice was done an able teacher, who had rendered the highest work, on the complaint of some offended parent who did not think his child had been treated fairly, or by the influence of some person who thought a teacher too active in reform movements.

This incident is told of one of Boston's ablest masters. One morning he looked despondent, when a friend met him and asked what troubled him.

"I haven't done my duty," was the gloomy reply of the master.

"What on earth do you mean?"

"Haven't you seen the morning paper? I re-

ceived last night every confounded vote of the School Committee."

It was a bit of humor that represented a tragic fact. Not only was the teacher often treated unjustly but his conscience was often wronged by the fact that he was held back from active work in many righteous causes for fear he would offend some politician who could bring enough influence to bear upon a not wholly responsible committee to deprive him of his position.

Through an act of the General Court, for the creation and passage of which Mr. Capen was largely responsible, this practice was stopped, and all regular teachers were placed upon permanent tenure of office to continue at the pleasure of the School Committee. This placed the teaching force of Boston above the greed of the politician, or the spite of the grieved parent, and made it possible for teachers to retain their positions so long as character and efficient service made them useful to the school system.

One thing which made Mr. Capen so useful to the School Committee was that he carried the same high business ideals into his work for the city that he had maintained in his private affairs. It was this fact that made him the despair of the politicians. They could not understand him. His code of conduct was so far above their standard of action, his way of doing things was so far removed from graft and so-called practical politics, that they not only could not use him for their selfish ends but did not know how to approach him. Constantly they found themselves defeated and

put to flight by his straightforward and righteous methods.

This could not be more clearly illustrated than by a transaction whereby a Boston politician tried to sell a piece of land for a school building. It was offered to the School Committee for several thousand dollars. The deal was a shrewd political move, an unadulterated piece of graft, and was about to pass the Committee. Mr. Capen asked that the matter might lie over for a week and the request was granted. Then he went in person to examine the ground. He found it not only undesirable, but he discovered a larger and much better lot a short distance away, in a better location. He had this lot surveyed and then secured an option on it for a week at eighteen thousand dollars less than the sum for which the politician had offered his land.

The next week the question came again before the Committee and the politician was present to urge his case. Then, when everything seemed to be in favor of the grafter, Mr. Capen asked him if he had ever noticed the lot across the street. He said he had. "Don't you think it more favorably located than the one you offer?" asked Mr. Capen. The politician admitted that he thought it might be but urged that it would be much higher in price and that it was probably not for sale. Then Mr. Capen took from his pocket the option showing a saving of eighteen thousand dollars to the city and presented it to the Committee.

This was a way of conducting municipal affairs with which the politicians were not familiar and

with which they could not cope. Yet it was this method of doing business which made one of the most experienced masters in the Boston schools say, when Mr. Capen was thinking of resigning from the Committee: "The city could better afford to pay ten thousand dollars a year than lose that man. He has saved us at least one hundred thousand dollars. One hundred thousand dollars is but a small fraction of what might have been saved the city in the last five years had the expenditure for schools been in the hands of men like Mr. Capen."

While his methods were the despair of the politician they won the confidence of the public. His faithful, honest services were so appreciated by all classes of citizens that in 1891 he was re-elected a member of the School Committee by a larger vote than was given to any other candidate for public office.

While Mr. Capen's service upon the School Committee covered a term of unprecedented achievement, both in securing new buildings and in the introduction of new methods, it stands much more conspicuously for the development of great personalities in the teaching and supervisory forces. It was a term of ardent public and professional loyalty during which the schools were brought to a moral plane from which they have never receded.

While Mr. Capen seemed to possess an almost magic power of bringing things to pass, accomplishing things of which others had despaired, there was a moral contagion about his personality,

as well as a moral inspiration in his words, which permeated the entire school system. His ideal for the teaching force is stated in an address made before the School Committee in 1893: "The teacher's power is next to that of the parent in its formative influence on childhood, and hence the School Board is laying more and more stress upon the character of its new appointments. Of all the wise words spoken by the late John D. Philbrick, none were more true than these: 'To cultivate the conscience, and to strengthen it so that it will exercise complete sway over the life and actions of an individual, is the highest aim of education; and any system of training the intellect which does not embrace this is a mockery.' The teacher who does not acknowledge his obligation to attend to this, let his sentence be, 'Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting,' and let his kingdom be taken from him."

"Mrs. Alice Freeman Palmer has most wisely said, 'I am such a heretic in these latter days, that I have great sympathy with that Superintendent of Schools in a great city who has often talked with me during the past ten years about the qualifications he desired for teachers in his schools. He has said, "I am not going to ask for deep learning as the first qualification of my teachers. I shall ask first, for firm, high, noble character; second, for fine manners; third, for sound learning; fourth, for professional training." It is not only the direct instruction given out by the text-books, but the silent moral influence of the teacher's life, which makes its power felt for good in all the

years. Many a boy or girl has gone from school out into the world's conflicts, and the hour of temptation comes. There is a moment of hesitation and then of victory, because of a memory of some faithful teacher, the silent power of whose life is felt across the years, and it may be across the continent. There is no limit to the power of a high moral life, and no teacher ever dies who is fit to live."

"Character first, scholarship afterwards, is the order of requirement today for every teacher's place in this city," became the slogan of the School Committee. They were more anxious to know by whom the children were trained than to know merely what they were to be taught. Believing that the chief aim of education is not the acquisition of knowledge by certain methods so much as the formation of a good character under the power of uplifting personalities, they were resolved to prevent the entering of any into the service who could not bear the severest test in this respect. "The teacher's profession," said Mr. Capen, "is a very sacred one, and those who do not thus consider it should never be permitted to enter it. On the other hand, those now in the service who do not feel it to be such, should leave it forever to those who have some proper conception of its supreme dignity and importance."

The demand, though always uncompromising, never seemed harsh or unreasonable. It never gave offense, chiefly because it was so evident that Mr. Capen was trying to exemplify in his own life what he required of others. Men could know him

but a short time before they were impressed by the fact that he lived and toiled only for the things of character. Everything else sank into insignificance in comparison with this one great quest.

There is always a danger that this Puritan type of conscience will become harsh and critical, creating fear rather than affection in those who work under it; that it will create a man who will rule by the power of a dominating will rather than lead by the attractiveness of a rich life. Mr. Capen was saved from this by what has been described as "that enkindling and transforming temper, which forever sees in humanity, not that which is bad and hateful, but that which is lovable and improvable, which can both discern and effectually speak to that nobler longing of the soul, which is the indestructible image of its Maker." His personality, as well as his methods, inspired rather than discouraged. Men and women went from his presence desiring to be better and to do better work.

Unconscious, probably, that this was one of the chief sources of his strength—for it was an element of character as natural as the breath of his life—he tried to inculcate this attitude in all the teachers. "Try to discover that which is best in your scholars and then inspire them to the development of all that is pure and ennobling."

Recognizing the great service Mr. Capen had rendered to the city of Boston, the citizens of Jamaica Plain, where he resided, petitioned the School Committee to name the new and beautiful grammar school for girls on Green Street, which

had been built through his efforts, the Samuel Billings Capen Grammar School, and the Committee granted the petition. It was a great honor and would have served to keep the memory of his good life before the successive generations of children who were being prepared for citizenship, as well as to provide a perpetual tribute to the man who was regarded as the first citizen of his community.

Mr. Capen, always keenly sensitive to any expressions of regard, and always declaring that it was better to pronounce a man's eulogy before he died than after his death, appreciated greatly the honor his fellow citizens and the School Committee had conferred upon him, but after careful consideration, and with the wise foresight that always characterized his actions, he declined to have the school named after him, fearing that the acceptance might be misunderstood, and that some might feel that his efforts on the Board had been for some selfish motive and that his usefulness for the coming year might be impaired. As a guardian of a great trust he was not willing to have his public influence prejudiced by any personal honors.

There was also another motive, which did not find its way into the public press. Mr. Capen saw that if the precedent should be established and followed some of our schools might be named after self-seeking politicians whose influence would be neither good nor abiding and whose memory would not be uplifting to the children. The School Board reluctantly granted his request

and at Mr. Capen's suggestion, on December 23rd, 1890, the school was named the "Bowditch School" in honor of one of Boston's most respected citizens, Nathaniel Bowditch. The Board also passed the rule that no school should be named in honor of any living person.

It was not until Mr. Capen proposed in 1893 to resign from the School Committee that he realized to the full extent how much his services had been appreciated by the citizens of Boston and by the teachers of her schools. Letters and personal requests poured upon him, asking that he continue his great work. The following resolution was passed and signed by every member of the School Committee: "We, the undersigned, believing the proposed resignation of Samuel B. Capen from the Boston School Board would be very detrimental to the best interests of our schools, as by his faithfulness, efficiency, and devotion he has proved himself a most valuable member, therefore earnestly request him to reconsider his determination."

The same petition was signed by seven hundred and sixty-two teachers of the Boston Public Schools. This action came in March, 1893. The expressions of appreciation and the petitions to continue in office had a great effect upon Mr. Capen. He felt truly that it "was never given to any man anywhere to have his associates treat him with more kindness and more courtesy and more generosity than you have always treated me." While at the beginning of the year he had resolved, owing to obligations that seemed to

make it imperative, to retire at an early date, this unanimous action caused him to hesitate and consider carefully where the path of duty lay.

In September of the same year, in justice to other interests and in fulfillment of other obligations, the resignation was renewed and on the evening of the twelfth he had his last official meeting with the School Committee.

One secret of the high regard in which he was held by the members of the School Committee was revealed in the speech made by Mr. Murphy, a Roman Catholic, in seconding the motion to accept the resignation. He spoke of the retiring President as a man of great breadth of observation and intelligence, a man who gave his whole heart to his work, who, without religious or political bias, recognized the fact that public work must be based upon the sympathy of the whole people.

This, however, was not the last of his influence in school affairs. Dr. Winship, editor of the "Educational Review," who knew Mr. Capen intimately, and was thoroughly conversant with his work, wrote after Mr. Capen's death: "For several years before he went upon the School Committee he dominated the selection of the members, and for some years after he left the Committee he continued to be influential in the selection of the members, and when at last it seemed wise to have new charter provisions with a small committee he was a vital factor in securing the new charter. All in all, for a quarter of a century his influence was indispensable in every crisis because

he had the public confidence in all those years to an unprecedented extent."

In an address delivered at the time of his resignation he said: "I would like to urge that in all the future, in everything that relates to the School Board, the influence of partisanship and politics shall never be felt. This department which cares for the children is most sacred, and I am glad to feel that almost without exception, during the years of which I have personal knowledge, the questions of party and creed have had no place. Character and fitness have been the only test of appointment and in the management of such a trust these are the only considerations which should have any place."

In this address he gave expression to two of the most fundamental facts of his faith. He was a thoroughgoing American in his attitude toward the public school system, believing that it should be absolutely separated from the dominance of any church, and as firmly believing that the only hope for the future of our republic was in having the children from all classes of homes thrown into this great melting-pot of American citizenship. "When I was upon the School Committee," he wrote in 1896, "one of our Boston schools had children representing twenty nationalities; every political division except Greece. I have been at the school and watched the teaching by sign language, for there was no other method of communication between teacher and pupil. And I have gone from those lower classes up to the first class and seen those lads made over into intelligent,

earnest, loyal, American citizens. Do we realize what our teachers are doing for our city? We divide up into parties and sects in other relations. But in the public school all barriers are down, the rich and the poor from homes of every nationality and creed meet together upon the same level, fitted to bear their part in the government of our city." He saw that there was scarcely anything more dangerous than class distinctions, and nothing that tended to break down this barrier so thoroughly as the public schools, where children of the rich and the poor, of the Protestant, Catholic, Jew and unbeliever met upon the same level. Hence he never ceased to raise his voice against the private school of whatever church or class and never failed to use an opportunity to urge parents of all classes to send their children to this great unifier of our heterogeneous population.

Even more intense, if such a thing were possible, was his interest in keeping the hand of the politician from the school system, the man whose interest was not in the child but in nominating this man or that to keep the party machinery running smoothly and in filling the pockets of the political parasites.

To prevent this the Public School Association was organized. In 1895 there was so much dissatisfaction with the nominations for the School Committee that several gentlemen met together, among whom Mr. Capen was one of the leaders, to suggest the names of Mr. A. Lawrence Lowell and Mr. Ames. Each of the parties took one of these names and they were both elected.

The following year there was a similar meeting of gentlemen, especially interested, and they suggested to the parties the names of Prof. Sedgwick and Mrs. Morton Kehew. The parties refused to nominate either of them. The following year the names of Prof. Sedgwick and Miss Edith Howes were suggested to the parties, and they were again refused. It was then decided to organize the Public School Association. What else could be done? Suggestions made in an honest way for two years had been rejected. The Association thus being formed, it was decided to renominate five of the old members of the School Committee.

At that time only one of these was taken by either party. The following year, not wishing to seem presumptuous, the Association simply suggested candidates and waited for the parties to take the initiative. The result was most unsatisfactory. Having tried every plan, therefore, the members of the Public School Association were compelled to take an entirely different course and nominate a ticket of their own. They were forced to this position by the leaders of the parties at that time, who, as long as they could feel that the Public School Association had but few votes, had no interest in what it had to say.

This first year in which they put up a complete ticket five of the Public School Association candidates were elected, including Mr. George A. Ernst, who was nominated by neither of the parties. The following year the Public School Association again put up a complete list, eight persons for three years, and two persons for one year.

This year the Republican party indorsed the whole ticket of the Association, the Democrats approved of five candidates and seven that were on the Association ticket were elected. The following year the Republicans again approved the whole Public School Association ticket. The Democrats approved three. Four names that were on the Association ticket were elected.

Probably nothing ever organized in Boston did as much to save the schools from the waste and deterioration inevitable under the rule of the politician. To the last of his life Mr. Capen continued to be one of the dominating figures in this work, helping to nominate the members of the committee and by public utterance and busy pen he contributed much toward their election.

In 1900 he made a stirring address in which he uttered a warning that ought to be heard by every citizen of the country: "It is for the highest interest of rich and poor alike that there should be good schools. Only a little handful of men can possibly reap any advantage in having them inferior. It has been my belief for many years that our citizens as a whole do not fully realize the importance of our educational system. We have welcomed to our shores men of every race and clime and their children fill our schools. Twelve or fifteen nationalities are often represented in a single school. It is in these schools that they learn the meaning of American citizenship. But even more than this, many children come from homes of poverty and wretchedness and too often of sin and shame. Do we realize the

importance at this early formative period of an antidote to these unhealthy surroundings, by having finely equipped school buildings with modern sanitary arrangements and teachers of culture and refinement? With the greatly enlarged powers of the school committee, the politician has seen the possibility of building in a few years a great political machine centering around the Board. The Committee is no longer, as formerly, simply an educational body, and naturally positions are sought by some men who would have little wish to be there if it were not for these increased powers."

## CHAPTER VI

## PRESIDENT OF BOSTON MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

The city has became the peril of our American life. The first great contest in our country was over the independence of a nation and was settled more than one hundred years ago at Yorktown by the surrender of Cornwallis. The second contest was over the unity of the republic and was settled nearly fifty years ago at Appomatox Court House by the surrender of General Lee's army. The third great question is over the purity of the municipal unit and it is more serious and more important than either of the others; it touches our very life and our very existence.

Thirty years ago this fact concerning the American city was just coming to be recognized by a few of the most thoughtful and conscientious of our Christian leaders. The mass of laymen were neither indifferent to the problem nor skeptical concerning the belief that anything could be done to better conditions. Some of them were in open opposition to any effort on the part of the Church to "meddle in politics." They believed their business was to herald the "simple gospel," that abominable phrase which has been used as the covering for dead men's bones. A few of the leaders of our American religious life, who

have come to be regarded as prophets, were then counted by multitudes as heretics or, at least, as men who were "not quite safe to follow."

Mr. Capen, whose religious faith was never questioned, and who had the advantage of holding the confidence of laymen, became one of the leaders in this new movement toward saving the city. In 1892 he delivered an address before the Congregational Club of Boston in which he awakened enough interest to start one of the most vital movements toward cleaner politics that Boston has ever had. He said: "I believe the time has fully come when in all our cities the churches, as a whole, must find a way to have their influence felt in securing a proper municipal government. We are asleep, most of us, in the midst of perils nearly as great as those which confronted us in the Civil War. Wendell Phillips said that the search for the solution of the problem of our great cities will test our free institutions more severely than our struggle with human slavery. It is a shame the way some of us neglect these public interests. We live in a time when there is a decay of public spirit. We should consider it an act of patriotism for the right men to give up their time and strength for public service. We ought to lay hold of some of our young men who are especially fitted for such service, and make them see that this duty, for Christ's sake and the country's, is as sacred as the prayer-meeting. The Church must come to the position where it shall be considered as honorable for one

of its members to be an official in the city government as to be a church warden or a deacon.

"A Governor of one of our States has lately been reported to have said that 'personal character has nothing to do with the question of the Presidency; it is simply one of availability.' Have you read 'Boss' Crocker's article in the 'North American,' in which he fully justifies Tammany methods? No wonder that Dr. Parkhurst's righteous soul is stirred to expose the evils that are so defiant! And who is to blame for this condition of things? You may remember a few years ago when the present District Attorney in New York was a candidate for his office against a man who had been faithful and successful in his efforts to bring to justice the 'boodle Alderman' of that day. When that election came, and when it would seem as though every man would rejoice in an opportunity to vote and show his interest in the right, hundreds and thousands of church members did not take the trouble either to register or to vote. On Fifth Avenue from Fortieth to Sixty-eighth Street there were three solid miles of brownstone fronts, and yet how many men who lived in these houses voted at that election? Only twenty-eight! Such a neglect is more than a disgrace and it ought to be made a crime. In many of our wards there are several hundreds of voters who are members of our churches. If you get fifty of them out to a primary meeting you do well, and yet we all know that here is the place to begin. It only takes a comparatively few men

to break up the plans of the 'rings' if the few are in earnest."

The result of this address was the forming of the Pilgrim Association, an organization which was of short duration but which became the first step in the foundation of the Boston Municipal League.

The object of the Association was "to secure the choice of such men to public office, the enactment and enforcement of such measures for municipal government as shall best promote the good order, prosperity and honor of our city. To this end the Association will co-operate as far as possible with all religious denominations and all civic and philanthropic organizations in the city."

In February of the next year, 1893, Mr. Capen spoke before the Baptist Social Union, where he set forth a plan for a city reform organization which would include every society in Boston devoted to idealistic ends. A practical politician in New York once said: "It's great sport to see people go to the polls in hordes and vote like cattle for the ticket we prepare. Reformers don't begin at the right point; they should begin at the point where nominations are made. The people think they make the nominations, but we do that business for them."

Mr. Capen felt that the same thing was true in Boston. "Are we not about weary of voting for men who go around with hat in hand in a shameless way, asking for our votes, some of whom we would not trust in our business to hold any position whatever? We live in an age where

there is such a mad haste to be rich, when selfish interests are so supreme, that there is a decay of public spirit, and patriotism is not quoted at par in any of our public exchanges."

As a result of this feeling, under the leadership of Mr. Capen, the Pilgrim Association chose a committee of seven members on municipal reform, desiring that every club or association standing for the best things in municipal life, should choose a similar committee. "There are from ten to twenty of these organizations and if each one will choose a committee of five or seven members, dependent somewhat upon the number of members in each case, there will be thus brought together a total of fifty or seventy-five men from all parts of the city and standing for its best interest. By a simple organization, and coming together from time to time for mutual consultation and help as representing these various organizations, they could wield an immense influence for good. Some say this is an attempt on the part of the Church to enter politics. We deny that this is its purpose in any way. For any branch of the Church, as such, to enter into such a movement, is an offence to our people. The intent is to take advantage of the associations and clubs already formed, which represent the conscience and the philanthropy of the city, and make them through their representatives, a united power for good. For it must never be forgotten that this whole movement starts with the one idea to confine itself wholly to municipal matters, and have no part whatever in National or State affairs. In this

way it is believed it can be kept entirely free from anything which savors of 'politics' so called. People are getting weary of partisanship, and to govern cities along political lines is as absurd as to control a railroad or a bank in this way."

There was an enthusiastic response throughout Boston to this appeal and, as a result, the following organizations came together on November 9, 1893, to form the Boston Municipal League: The Pilgrim Association, Baptist Social Union, Methodist Social Union, Unitarian Club, Massachusetts Society for Promoting Good Citizenship, Channing Club, Tolstoi Club, the old Boston Congregational Club, Young Men's Baptist Social Union, Monday Evening Club, the Catholic Union and the Eliot Club. Mr. Capen was elected president and Mr. Edwin D. Mead secretary.

The new organization represented men of every shade of political opinion on State and National questions but men who believed also that in city affairs the need was simply for business methods and good leaders. "We must remember," said Mr. Capen, "that neither of the two great parties has any special principles to guide in municipal affairs. Their principles apply almost wholly to National and State interests; but men have been so much accustomed in all the past to work on party lines, even in municipal matters, that much time will be required before they will, in sufficient numbers, be willing to vote individually on municipal election issues. This League is to be absolutely non-partisan, and its discussions are limited to questions relating to municipal matters. We

are not organized for the political advancement of our own members, for we have no wish for public office. We are trying, first, to understand better the problems of municipal government and then to be helpful in solving them. We have, therefore, no desire at present to nominate candidates for office, provided men of character and persons fit for public trust are nominated by others. When this is not the case, we shall make our protest by suggesting, if possible, other names. It seems almost unnecessary to add that in a movement of this kind there would be no use or place for the local 'boss' and the ward politician of either party. They are, as a class, truly selfish; they are only for themselves and they have no place in a business corporation."

The League was equally free from sectarian prejudices—the membership being composed of liberals and conservatives, Protestants and Catholics—though it could in the highest sense be called religious. It was part of a great movement sweeping over this country, probably the most important that had come to the American people since the overthrow of slavery. The men who composed it believed with De Tocqueville that "municipal institutions are to liberty what the primary school is to science," and that the only way America could be saved was by saving her cities. They were for the most part avowed Christian men, most of them members of the Christian Church, but men who believed that Christianity was good only as it was good for something, only as it could be made part of the practical affairs

of life and, almost with the spirit of crusaders, embodying their religion in their politics, they determined to capture the city for the Kingdom of God.

Being religious men they had profound faith in the principle set forth by the great Teacher, "Know the truth and the truth shall make you free." Their chief weapon was facts and their great hope was in public opinion. Mr. Capen declared in his opening address before the League: "Public opinion can be depended upon always in favor of the best things. Mr. Moorfield Storey was right when he said at the Philadelphia convention that we should be surprised 'if we could in each city see the photographs of men who constitute the "rings" of which we complain and could read their histories; we would be ashamed of our subjection. Municipal reform is only action of will.' It certainly is true that there are far more good men in every city than there are bad, and that the number who desire a corrupt government is very small. The poor man is even more interested than the rich in good city government. He needs good public schools for he is obliged to send his children to them while the rich man, if he is dissatisfied, can send his to some private institution. The poor man, especially, needs clean streets and good sewerage for he must stay in the city through the heat of the summer while the rich man can take his family to the mountains or the seashore. We only need to get those who are interested in the best things to work together and the whole problem is solved."

At the first meeting of the Municipal League, after its reorganization, the President set forth in characteristic clearness a program he believed it should follow. It was revolutionary so far as the political organization of the city was concerned, striking at the very roots of those things that had made possible bribery and political corruption.

Boston had always elected a mayor for a term of one year but Mr. Capen proposed that he should be elected for three years. "All citizens would feel more strongly the importance of the election, if it was to be filled for a longer term, than they do now. Many people cannot be aroused when the election is an annual one. Furthermore, the Mayor himself would be less worked, would be more free from the influence of politicians, would be better able, also, to do the best things, if he was conscious that the term was for three years."

The second radical reform proposed was that there should be one representative council instead of two. The arguments used for continuing the two bodies were: first, that it would be more difficult to corrupt two bodies than one; and, second, that one acts as a check upon the other. In answer to this, it was argued that if there was but one body it should be of such size as not to be easily susceptible to improper considerations, and that it should be provided that all appropriations and all questions of great importance should not be acted upon without two readings, which should take place several days apart to give opportunity

to citizens through the press and otherwise to make protest if occasion should require it.

The most far-reaching reform suggested in this address was that there should be some sort of minority representation. "The principle of having one man or a group of men from each district, which practically disfranchises nearly or quite one half the voters, is wrong. When a Republican votes in a Democratic district for local representatives, his vote is thrown away, and in the same manner when a Democrat votes in a Republican district his vote is thrown away. To illustrate the injuries of this matter let me use figures which will be familiar. In Maryland one party cast 92,000 votes and the other 113,000 votes, and the latter had all the representation, while the 92,000 votes had no voice. In Indiana at the last national election one party cast 254,000 and the other 259,000 votes, an almost equal number, and yet one party had but two representatives and the other eleven. The same state of things exists in our cities where there is a district system. As a consequence, men remain away from the caucus and the polls because they know that their votes amount to nothing. Furthermore, on the district plan, both parties would often nominate the available and not the able man. Men of positive convictions and force make enemies and cannot be elected in their own district but by a general representation they can be. Again, reform measures cannot get a hearing for they have no representation, and cannot have until they can secure a majority in some one district. But if all those

interested who are scattered through a city will unite on some one man then the reform would be represented and would be sure of a hearing. Giving up the district system as a whole and voting for officials on a general ticket would be a death blow to bribery, which almost universally occurs in close districts. Where there are no close districts, there would be no inducement to purchase votes. On the new plan we shall have more of what could be called larger and better men. A man may appear quite important in a little district, but he is very small when he has to run the gauntlet of a large city. On such a plan, men in office would not be obliged to spend so much time in posing and balancing their votes so as to make sure of their re-election. In doing their duty they would be sure of the support of the best citizens whose influence would be felt at the next election."

In addition to the work of making these radical changes in the political organization of the city, the League proposed the larger work of creating such a civic pride that the best men of the city would be willing to accept public office. Public opinion was such that when good men made sacrifices of their private affairs to serve the public they were often subject to the sneers of their friends. The League proposed to change this—to make them feel that it was just as honorable to serve the city government as to be a director in a bank or a professor in Harvard College.

"I do not wish to be misunderstood," said Mr. Capen, "for I have no sympathy with a hasty

expression that is sometimes heard, that there are no good men in public life. My experience has proved to me that there are just as honest and capable men in municipal positions in the City of Boston today as there ever were in the past. The trouble is that there are too many of whom this cannot be said in truth.

"Our work is to increase the number of those in public life who can be absolutely trusted to watch over the city's interests as they would their own. We want, if possible, to have the same interest taken by a class of our citizens as is seen across the water. The personnel of the London City Council is said to be equal in character and ability to members of Parliament. In the City of Oxford two presidents of colleges are members of the Board of Aldermen. In Germany it is demanded that the performance of civic duties shall determine civic rights; failure to perform the one deprives of the other. In the City of Berlin, if a man refuses to accept office when called upon by his fellow citizens, he is not only disfranchised but compelled to pay larger taxes. Ought there not to be a list made from the registration list after election of those who have not voted? And ought not a constant neglect of suffrage be punished by a fine? Certainly some way must be found to make people ashamed of the neglect of their duty as citizens."

The urging of this program was not all that engaged the energies of the League. It gave its attention to a large number of problems that were of vital interest to the citizens, such as the im-

provement of the fire department, the extension of school accommodations, a better and enlarged system of docks, better housing of the poor, a school of practical trades and a wiser administration of public institutions. This program, however, outlined the greatest activities of the League and made this body, as Mr. Edwin D. Mead has declared, "the best municipal organization that we have ever had in Boston."

Mr. Capen was a firm believer in representative government. In politics, he was a Republican, opposing in his last years many of the Progressive tendencies, but in political theory he had unbounded confidence in the principles at the foundation of our government, and he never doubted that the voice of the people was the voice of God, if the people only had a fair opportunity to learn the truth.

Believing this, no man ever had more confidence in the power of public opinion—that public opinion would be right—if the facts, free from prejudice and deception, could only be placed before the people. Hence his speeches were usually printed, so that they might reach a wider public than could be touched by the spoken word, and those delivered before the Municipal League were given very wide circulation. Thus his written and spoken words became great factors in moulding the thought of the citizens of Massachusetts, and later were very largely embodied in the new charter of Boston. The term of the mayor was lengthened and the single chamber in the Council was adopted. Many other reforms advocated by

Mr. Capen and his fellow workers were accepted and, while the League ceased to be an active organization, it was a mighty forerunner, preparing the thought of men for a later reform—especially for minority representation.

In one of his speeches before the League, Mr. Capen pointed out the extremely interesting fact that the expenses of Boston had grown until they exceeded those of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. With an enormous volume of money to be collected and dispersed from year to year, he showed that the voters and tax-payers of Boston were entrusting the financial interests of the municipal corporation to men of small experience and ability in business operations. Boston had two separate representative bodies—a small Board of Aldermen and a large Common Council. A half dozen members of the Board of Aldermen paid no taxes whatever, except the poll tax, which is levied against every citizen, and out of seventy-five members of the Common Council only sixteen were on the tax lists. Yet this body of seventy-five was largely concerned with the levying of many millions of taxes every year and with the expenditure of from thirty to forty millions of dollars. To remedy this great defect and secure a better class of men to administer the affairs of so great a corporation as the city, Mr. Capen and the League declared boldly in favor of the total abolition of the Common Council and the enlargement of the Board of Aldermen in the municipal chamber to perhaps twenty-five members, with salaries of three thousand dollars each and an al-

lowance for expenses. Under the arrangement which existed at that time the members of the Common Council ran up most extraordinary bills for carriage hire and other expenses, incurred ostensibly in the municipal service.

But the great principle for which Mr. Capen and the League contended most earnestly was the election of all members of the municipal government on a general ticket recognizing a proportional representation. Mr. Capen was one of the most conspicuous figures advocating proportional representation in the entire country and the League had for the chairman of its committee on that subject Mr. Moorfield Storey, who was widely recognized as an authority. It was natural that Boston, of all cities of the United States, should be the one to set the example of an application of some form of minority or proportional representation in the election of a City Council. Massachusetts was the home of enlightened and progressive legislation and the whole country was looking to Mr. Capen and his colleagues for the securing of some such system which would guarantee a better government.

The "New England Magazine" said: "Mr. Capen is an ideal citizen, a man of broad mind and of great catholicity, of kindliness, of rare political sagacity, with a passion for public purity and the public welfare, and with an infinite capacity for taking pains. Ten such men could save any Sodom or Gomorrah. No other man in recent years has rendered such important service as Mr. Capen on the Boston School Board. Wherever

any improvement for the good of Boston is in progress, there he is likely to be found."

While this League did not wholly save the modern Sodom of Boston, no group of men has ever gathered in the city which has done more toward shaping its future. The principles they advocated were later embodied in the new charter and while the League, after a few years of strenuous service, ceased its activities, owing largely to the fact that its work was subdivided and carried forward by other organizations, the main principles for which it stood are today the working principles of the Boston city government.

Not only did Mr. Capen do very important work as President of the Boston Municipal League but, also, in the National Municipal League. For ten years, from 1895 to 1905, he was its Vice-president. He occupied important places in its programs and was helpful in its councils, throwing much of his energy into the larger questions of municipal reform.

## CHAPTER VII

## IDEALS OF CITIZENSHIP

There is a providence in the life of men as well as in the life of nations. Frederick Robertson was turned aside from the army to become one of the greatest of English preachers by the simple incident of the barking of a dog, and Sir Walter Scott was saved to the world, to be one of its greatest novelists, by a few humiliating failures at the bar.

There were two incidents in the life of Mr. Capen which saved him from lines he would have marked out for himself and resulted in his becoming one of America's most useful laymen. When he was a young man he looked toward the ministry, but sickness made this impossible, turning him toward a larger ministry where he was to have the world for his parish. The other incident was more subtle, belonging to those mysterious providences which can only be explained by belief in an overruling hand. He had an ambition to become one of the great authorities in the world of finance, to accumulate a fortune, not for the sake of the money, but that he might use it in the bringing of the Kingdom of God on the earth. There were several times when it seemed that this dream of his life was to be realized. One was when he resigned from the Boston School Committee to become Vice-president of the Howard Bank. This

seemed to be an opening for which he had waited but, like other opportunities, it proved a bitter disappointment. It was not God's will that he should become a financier. A larger opportunity was awaiting him—that of becoming one of the leading laymen of America, of influencing the spiritual life and contributing to the uplift of the social life of the nation.

It was inevitable that a man of such intense, wise and practical patriotism should become an influence extending far beyond his city, battling with the perils which threatened his nation and strengthening those positive forces which were to make a better people. Wherever there was a public danger, he was sure to be one of the first to enter the conflict against it, and wherever there was an oppressed people, he was one of the first to use his voice in protest. He gave much of his energy especially to fighting four of our greatest national evils.

Someone went to Dr. Parkhurst, after his campaign of reform in New York City, and congratulated him on what he had done. He replied, "We have not done a thing and we never shall do anything until we have gotten rid of these saloons." Perhaps this is putting the matter too strongly, but Mr. Capen had a deep feeling that we can never reform any city so long as we have open saloons, thronged with loafers of the worst kind, who want things that are bad. He was confident that it was the power of the liquor interests that was largely responsible for blocking reform the world over, that it was in their places that mis-

chief was concocted, and he believed that if we could get rid of the saloons in our cities it would make municipal reform an easy matter.

He gave his aid, therefore, to every movement which blocked the progress of this national evil. He threw himself with tremendous enthusiasm into the fight during the year of 1895 for the Norwegian Bill, a bill which was intended primarily to abolish the common saloon, to authorize the sale of liquor by an association of persons who had no inducement to increase their business, to confine the sale of liquor within decent hours, and to devote its profits to public advantage. The primary object of the bill was to take away from the liquor dealer all financial profit, thus, at one blow, destroying the chief motive which keeps him in business. It was supported heartily by many of the leading citizens of Massachusetts, including people like Senator Hoar, Alice Freeman Palmer, Julia Ward Howe, Curtis Guild, Mary A. Livermore, Dr. Alexander McKenzie and Dean Hodges.

Mr. Capen was an ardent advocate of the bill, first, because it appealed to his sense of justice and fair play. Boston was surrounded, like every other great city, with towns which persistently voted out the saloon, turning the worst elements of their communities into the city for their liquor. As a result, all the late trains were crowded with those who had spent the evening in debauchery, and travel was uncomfortable for decent people. Mr. Capen saw that this plan of the Norwegian Bill would remove the saloons from the suburbs, would reduce the number in the city from nine

hundred to one hundred and fifty and would thus relieve thousands of citizens of the inconvenience and the unpleasantness involved in the existing license arrangements. He supported it because it appealed to his reason. It would abolish the gilded saloon, taking away everything attractive about it, and thus depriving it of its attractiveness as a social center for young men. But his chief reason for supporting it was that it was a step toward ultimate prohibition. The illustration which he used in one of his addresses is worth remembering: "Here is a tremendous conflagration; it has been going on for years; we have been fighting it with water and it does not go out. It goes out in one place and breaks out in another; and bye and bye somebody goes to the rear and finds out the cause. There are men behind pouring on oil. They come back and say, 'We shall never put this fire out until we stop these men putting on oil.' Somebody says, 'Oil smells bad; oil is dirty stuff; and if you touch it you won't be clean when you get through.' These men say, 'We don't care if it does smell bad. We are willing to go in there and stop that pouring of oil on the fire.' Now it seems to me, here is the thing in a nutshell. We have been trying by temperance text books, and moral suasion, and every sort of thing, and it does not put out the fire because there are so many in the rear who are making tremendous profits; and you can never stop it so long as this goes on. When you stop the private profits, when you get the motive out of the way, when you stop the oil, you can put the fire out."

Mr. Capen was equally sensitive to the injustice done to the Indians by corrupt politicians. Indeed, the blood of every American ought to tingle at the thought of the foul stain upon our national honor because of the treatment the Indian has received. General Sherman declared that we have made more than one thousand treaties with the Indian but the United States government has never kept one of them, if there was anything to be made by breaking it; while the Indian has never broken one unless he first had an excuse in some cruel wrong from the white man. Our treatment of him has been such that our boasted American Republic is to him only synonymous with a nation of liars.

Mr. Capen gave expression to these wrongs in one of his public addresses before the Indian Association: "While our ears have ever been open to the cry of distress the world over, the silent Indian moan has passed, too often, unheard. We have made him a prisoner upon the reservation, and when we have wanted his land we have taken it and put him on some which, just at that time, we did not happen to want. His appeal, when in suffering and distress, has been stifled by those who can make the most money out of him, and if, hungry and in despair, he leaves the reservation, we shoot him. We have put him in control of an agent whose authority is as absolute as the Czar's. And I beg of you to notice that the wrongs are not all in the past; they are of the present. Those who say otherwise have either not examined the facts or else they are deceived. While there has

been much progress made since General Grant's administration, the machinery of our Indian affairs in the last analysis seems yet to be largely a scheme to plunder the Indian. Its mechanism is so complicated that there are comparatively few who understand the wrongs and these seem almost powerless to right them."

The Indian has suffered even at the hands of those who have been paid by the government to care for him. An Indian in Nebraska, on one of our reservations, slightly injured his knee. There was a physician paid a large salary by the government, but when asked to visit this man he refused to go. The Indian grew worse until the leg decayed. The cries of the sufferer could be heard far and near, yet the physician heeded not, until finally a friend in mercy took a hatchet and chopped off the limb. The Indian died in his agony, the physician never once having visited him. This may be an extreme illustration, but it is only one of the hundreds which might be cited to show the neglect these people have suffered.

They have been robbed through the politicians. In North Dakota one of the tribes asked that they might have some barns. The request was granted; the lumber, valued at three thousand dollars, was bought in Minneapolis and the freight charges, which ought to have been about fifteen hundred dollars, were twenty-three thousand. A little clerk in Washington who belonged to the "ring" added an extra cipher to care for the pockets of the politicians.

The Indian's land has been taken from him. To

show exactly what this means, let us notice an incident that occurred in Southern California. A lot of land-grabbers took from the Indians their property. When private individuals ascertained the facts, complaint was made, and an order was issued from the government for the removal of the exploiters, but in spite of this mandate they remained where they were, in defiance of law, and the Indians were left in poverty.

In view of all these abuses Mr. Capen said of the department constituted to meet the needs of the Indian: "The Indian Bureau, as at present constituted, cannot do for the Indian what he needs. It is part of the political machine, and its appointees are selected because they have done good service as ward politicians. It is no more fitted to lead the Indians aright than Pharaoh was to lead the Israelites out of their house of bondage."

To correct this abuse, he was active in the formation of the Indian Association and in advocating reform measures for better conditions. He was a member of the Boston Indian Citizenship Committee, which included such men as the Hon. John D. Long and other of Boston's leading citizens. This Committee not only criticized the policy of the government, but offered a positive program which did much to lift the burden from the Red Man's shoulders and brought a new and better day for these people who had been the victims of the politicians.

In the great crisis of 1896, when Mr. Bryan was trying to carry the country for free silver and was

striking at the very foundation of many of those institutions which had been considered the strength of our nation, Mr. Capen entered the campaign with characteristic earnestness and made some of his best adresses. He truly felt that: "Not since the foundation of the Republic has there been an election of such infinite importance as the one which is soon to be decided. Not even that of 1860, which involved the slavery issue, went deeper to the very foundation of our national existence. It is a serious hour, and every patriotic citizen should be ready to contribute whatever he may possess for the public good. It is not a time for harsh or bitter words, and it is certainly not a time to raise a sectional cry, for the questions are not and cannot be sectional. The nation is one and our interests are common interests. That man is a public enemy who attempts to array class against class, the farmer and the laborer against the 'gold bugs' or Wall Street."

Mr. Capen was elected as Vice-president of the Business Men's Non-Partisan Sound Money League of Boston and his utterances found wide circulation. He spoke in September before the Boston Ministers' Meeting. The address was presented *verbatim* in the "Congregationalist," and later was issued as a campaign document by the Sound Money League. In no other address can one of the chief characteristics of the man be more clearly seen than in this. He was dealing primarily with the question of finance, yet it was a question which involved, as he believed, the very destiny of the nation. Hence he could not discuss

the issue as a question of economics alone. His patriotism rose, like that of the Hebrew prophets, to a spirit of religion and involved the very issues of the Kingdom of God. He felt that his nation was on trial before the earth, one choice leading to national honor and prosperity, the other to repudiation and national disgrace, and with the passion of an evangelist he pleaded with men to turn to God to lead them in their decision.

While Mr. Capen was a leader in that new civic movement, which proposed to establish the Kingdom of God on the earth and was a brilliant personal example of the attempt to apply Christianity to the problems of city and nation, yet he was equally firm in his conviction that the Church as an institution should take no part in active politics. Wherever she had tried this experiment, she had not only cheapened herself, but had weakened her power in regenerating the world. "A church 'ring' would become as obnoxious as any other 'ring.' It is fundamentally regeneration and not reformation that is needed, and it is to this great work that the Church, with singleness of purpose, should devote herself."

He believed that if the Church should enter politics, she would not only fail in her great work, but would also bring upon herself endless divisions. "If with an open Bible," he said, "the world is divided into many sects, what further divisions and sub-divisions and semi-sub-divisions will there be where there is no revelation and where men honestly differ. Is it not clear to all that the inevitable result would be confusion, to

the shame and reproach of Him whose mission was peace, and whose last prayer was that they might be one?'' Yet believing that the Church should not enter politics, he also believed firmly that Christian men should organize themselves, irrespective of church divisions, into civic clubs, and he was one of the leaders in advocating the formation of these clubs, especially among young people.

Writing in the ''Christian Endeavor World'' he said, ''Christian Endeavorers are sacredly bound to be intelligent upon these questions which have to do with the well being of the cities where they reside. To secure such knowledge will require study and effort. There is more ignorance to the square inch at this point than at almost any other. Comparatively few ever read the charter of their city, or the reports of the school committee, or know definitely very much about the practical workings of their own government. Instead of this our young men have been reading *David Harum* and *Eben Holden.* An exception should be made in one class in many of our cities, the Irish Americans. A recent conversation with one of the trustees of one of our city libraries brought out the fact that for many years he had been watching young men's reading. The Irish Americans read history, biography and constitutional law; the young men of American ancestry read novels. The time has certainly come to urge Christian Endeavorers to see a religious application, as well as a glorious opportunity, in the study of social and municipal questions.''

He advocated that these clubs be organized after the pattern of our national and state legislative bodies, with speakers and other officers and various committees, each with some definite purpose; that they should study rules of order and Parliamentary practices and methods so that the members would be fully capable, when older, of presiding over public assemblies. These clubs should discuss questions concerning the best organization of city government; they should study the principles of proportional representation, the care of criminals and paupers, arbitration between capital and labor, tenement-house laws, public baths, parks, schools and many other questions.

He saw that a number of such clubs, with discussions and courses of study, would soon make a generation of intelligent young men fit for splendid service. Furthermore, they would help to make the Christian life attractive, not only to "goody-goody" young men but also to those who are strongest. They would keep before them the glory of service and the splendid possibilities of noble Christian citizenship; they would guarantee the vote of the city to the side of righteousness and would insure the safety of the republic.

Mr. Capen, who was not only an idealist but a practical politician, saw clearly that many of our national perils grow out of the neglect of citizens in attending the caucus. It is here that our battles are fought and lost or won. Notwithstanding this, it is neglected by the vast majority of men. He

saw that the thing we have to fear is not ignorance alone, but also this criminal indifference, upon which the politician can always count in his plans and trades.

"Our difficulty," said Mr. Capen, "is not with the great number of selfish voters, but with the far greater number of indifferent good men. Such good men, whenever they come out to vote, bury the politician under an avalanche, and for the simple reason that there are far more good men than bad. The forces of evil can be conquered at any election in any city when the forces of good-will practically unite by voting at the caucus. It is important that we should keep ever before our people that popular government in our cities is still in the experimental stage, and that unless in some way we can arouse the whole community to be interested at the caucus as the initial point, failure will not be far away. The question is one of self-preservation. The first duty of every citizen is to be interested in politics and he should no more desire to escape it than to escape paying the fair proportion of taxes to the State. To shirk either duty is to steal from the Government that which is its due. We want a patriotism which does not exhaust itself in singing about the stars and stripes, but which is willing to go into the thick of the fight at every primary meeting. If we complain that the politicians control these, it is nobody's fault but our own, for the politicians are in a helpless minority against the great population. We say things are all cut and dried by the selfish schemer, before the caucus. What

is to hinder the other class from doing some cutting and drying in advance? There is no monopoly of this work in any community reserved to any class. Put in some work yourself and see how fruitful for good it will be. We say, 'politics are dirty.' Then take hold and clean them! But some will say, 'I am in sympathy with neither party and cannot go to either caucus.' Then you are in honor bound to get together with other men and make a new one of some sort. As an American citizen you have no right to be silent and dumb in the initiative. You are practically useless unless you try to improve the old parties or start an independent movement. Simply complaining of others cannot satisfy the duties of citizenship.''

It is not enough for the citizen simply to nominate; that step will count practically for nothing unless he sees to it that his nominations are endorsed at the polls. Yet the study of the statistics concerning the voters of any city will reveal the fact that there are vast numbers who never take the trouble to register a choice. It was seldom that Mr. Capen ever made a political address when he did not take occasion to say that this neglect is little short of crime; that the man who is so full of his pleasures or so interested to get to his place of business in the morning, that he cannot turn aside a few rods and cast his vote for righteous government is only one stage removed from a criminal. ''For an American citizen to neglect a vote, is to be false to the flag that covers him and to the state and city that protects his property

and his home. The sacrament of our political life is the casting of our ballot."

While he had such confidence in the people and believed in the power of public opinion for purifying the nation, he stood against many of the modern political movements which are supposed to be in the direction of greater democracy. He opposed especially the referendum. This probably grew out of his practical experience in the realm of politics. One of the best bills ever brought before the General Court of Massachusetts was presented when Mr. Capen was President of the Municipal League. That bill had a most remarkable list of names in its favor. It had the approval of the leading banking firms of Boston, the great mercantile houses and the members of the Board of Trade and Chamber of Commerce. The committee on municipal affairs was most sympathetic toward the bill, while men of both political parties seemed to be almost equally interested. The leading citizens of Boston appeared in its favor and it had almost no opposition. Yet in an evil hour the referendum was added to it and, as a result, in spite of all the power it had behind it, the bill went down in defeat.

Mr. Capen resented the statement that he was afraid to trust the people. He said, "I am not afraid to trust them if they could be separated from the influence of selfish men and if the facts could be brought before them. If all the voters could be brought together on Boston Common, or in smaller groups, where someone could explain the various features of the bill and give the peo-

ple a chance to ask questions, so that they might thoroughly understand it, the result would be fairly safe. I have always believed that there are more good men in the city than bad; that there are more in the city who want good government than bad. The poor man suffers more from waste and extravagance than the rich. But every one must know that it is very difficult to get these problems and questions before the voters as a whole. Too many feel that the more money spent, the more chances for work, for the property owners pay the taxes. They do not see that waste directly or indirectly adds to their own rent and all other expenses. Too many are apt to be controlled by some district or ward leader and they vote as they are told to vote. You do not get an individual expression of opinion by the referendum; what you do get, too often, is the opinion of men who have power to control others."

His personal example in citizenship was probably even a greater inspiration to young men than his words or writings. To him the caucus and the ballot box were as sacred as the prayer-meeting, and nothing short of severe sickness could keep him from either. Into every city campaign for the election of a mayor, as well as into the state and national elections, he threw himself with all the power of his personality, always showing intense but controlled feeling over the issues. There was no cause, however slight, which looked for the betterment of his community, in which his influence was not felt. With all the duties of his busy life he was never too busy to attend a com-

mittee meeting or to speak a word at gatherings in the interest of civic improvement. He kept Memorial Day as sacred, always marched with the old veterans and never refused to speak a word of praise or encouragement when they sought his aid. He kept in touch with the Republican Committee of his ward, exerted personal influence in the choice of the candidates, was for years selected as a delegate from his district to the State Convention of the Republican Party and entered into many of the city, state and national campaigns. Usually, for weeks before election he would discuss with his Bible Class the issues involved and urge the members to active participation. As a result of this personal example hundreds of young men received inspiration and entered into the movement for cleaner politics.

## CHAPTER VIII

## WORK FOR INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION

We have seen how, with his profound conviction that the gates of hell could not ultimately prevail against the Kingdom of God, Mr. Capen threw himself into every reform touching the city and nation and into every good work of the Christian Church, believing that the right would ultimately triumph and the earth would become the Lord's. Even the dense ignorance and superstition of Africa and the tenacity of the religions of the Orient could not overcome his persistent optimism concerning the victory of his Christ over the whole earth.

It was natural that this man, whose fundamental conviction was that Christianity contains a workable program for the practical affairs of life and who threw himself into the crusade of taking the world for his Master, should also carry his religion into the politics of the world and enter the campaign in behalf of international arbitration.

He became a part of the Mohonk Conference, one of the pioneer movements in behalf of world peace, when the nations of the earth dreamed of no other way of settling their disputes than by armies and navies. For untold centuries all tribal and national troubles had been settled on

the battlefield. Outside of a few poets and other men who were considered dreamers, the majority of people could think of no judge except death, no conclusion except that which was written in human blood. The mere mention of arbitration in Congress brought forth sneers; statesmen; were on the side of war and nations were ready to fly to arms to settle any disagreement.

It was a little company of people, mostly professional men, who met at Mohonk at the invitation of that grand and good Quaker, Mr. Albert K. Smiley, to create public sentiment against war. A few business men were included, among whom, as we have indicated, was Mr. Capen. He immediately threw his energies into that work and his optimism became contagious. Though their company was small they could not become discouraged. With such consecration and faith in their ranks, they were destined to become a world power, leading the thoughts of nations.

These evangelists of peace were not blind to the terrific forces against which they were compelled to fight. There were war leagues in every nation, and these leagues, directly or indirectly, were the greatest enemies to progress. They grew more bitter as they saw the rapid advance of the peace movement. There were navy leagues in this country and in Great Britain, Germany and France, which were skillful in playing one nation against another. Pictures of every warship built by a nation were published in the newspapers and magazines of others, primarily to encourage the building of more and larger battleships. In one

national assembly the increase of the navy of one nation was given as a reason why other nations should increase their navies. When we built more warships, they built more warships. Newspapers gloated over the weaknesses of rivals and wrote insulting articles to arouse the passions and keep alive the war spirit. Whenever there was a bill before Congress for the building of more dreadnoughts, the navy leagues did not fail to bring before the country the cry of war with Japan. They played skillfully upon the passions and prejudices of men to increase the fighting machinery of the world.

Another foe to peace was the yellow press. The German chancellor said some time ago in the Reichstag that "Wars are not planned and brought about in these days by governments, but noisy and fanatical minorities drive nations to war." It was the yellow press that drove the United States into the war with Spain in 1898. Mr. Root when he was Secretary of State declared: "There are no international controversies so serious that they cannot be settled peaceably if both parties really desire settlement; while there are few causes of dispute so trifling that they cannot be made the occasion of war if either party really desires war. The matters in dispute between nations are nothing; the spirit which deals with them is everything." Thus the jingoism of the press, with its power to create a war atmosphere, was one of the obstacles which made it difficult to settle international controversies by arbitration.

No one can be blind to the fact that there is an organized effort to make our country a great military nation. Nowhere is this more clear than in the new life that has come to Washington, our capital city, in the last few years. Brass buttons and epaulets are constantly becoming more conspicuous. In 1908, there were seven hundred and twenty-seven military and naval officers on the active and retired lists. Most of these had their families with them and in addition there were a number of families of deceased officers. This group of people were gradually transforming the capital of the country into a military and naval center and was constantly exerting an influence upon Congress for continued development and increased expenditures in military and naval lines.

But in spite of these forces which strove to keep the war spirit alive, and which are today the greatest enemies of peace, these consecrated workers in behalf of international arbitration proceeded to the task with confidence in the triumph of the right. In the second meeting of the Conference, in 1896, Mr. Capen presented the report of the Business Committee, which was based upon a principle characteristic of the man, that was clearly one source of his usefulness to every great reform movement. He said: "We are trying to be leaders of public thought and unless we can blaze the path ahead, Mohonk is false to its opportunities and its traditions. But we do not want to take so long a step forward that the great mass of intelligent people shall feel that we are

proposing that which is impracticable; for in that way we shall lose our power and our ability to influence and hold public thought." It was this ability to lead without offending, to stand for idealism without incurring the stigma of "dreamer," which gave to him the confidence of the people and enabled him to guide organizations and movements to something better where, perhaps, other men, equally earnest, failed.

It was probably this quality, as much as any other, which characterized him as a leader and which made him so eagerly sought in difficult situations. During the Andover Controversy, when the trustees of that Seminary were divided, and when the theological debate threatened to divide the Congregational denomination and the American Board, he was sought as a man who could bring peace and lead the contending parties together. Earnest letters were written, urging him to become a member of the Board of Trustees, but he declined. If there was any difficult situation in his church, or in the missionary societies, where someone was needed who could heal ugly wounds or lead differing elements to a useful result, he was usually the man who was sought. This gift for settling disputes and misunderstandings made him an unusually useful man, placed him year after year upon the Business Committee at Mohonk, and enabled him to contribute much to the effectiveness of this peace movement.

The appeal read by Mr. Capen before the Conference in 1896, calling for a permanent tribunal, is interesting not only as a matter of history, but

as a clear and forceful statement of the peace program for which he exerted so much of his influence. "In the settlement of personal controversies civilization has substituted the appeal to law for the appeal to force. It is high time for a like substitution of law for war in the settlement of controversies between nations. Law establishes justice; war simply demonstrates power. Such a substitution of law for war requires a permanent tribunal to which all nations may appeal. Its personnel may change but its judicial life should be continuous; its mere existence would often prevent controversy and its decisions would become a recognized interpretation of international law. It would not impair the sovereignty, lessen the dignity, nor hazard the honor or safety of any nation. The enforcement of its judgments might be safely left to the moral obligations of the nation concerned and the moral sentiments of mankind. Such a tribunal should be so constituted that all civilized nations may, if they choose, by adhering to the treaty constituting it, avail themselves of its benefits. Disarmament of the nations should follow such recognition of, and provision for, the reign of reason over the passions of mankind."

He believed the great weapon by which men were to fight for this principle was public opinon. The greatest enemy after all to the peace movement was the apathy and indifference of men. The majority of citizens had no more interest in this subject than they had over a discussion of aniline dyes. Mr. Capen saw that "We must help to make

public opinion in this country; for public opinion is master here."

Not only did he seek to create a public sentiment among the adults of the country but he devoted himself with zeal to interesting young people in this subject. He was appointed by the Business Committee of the Mohonk Conference to interview Dr. Clark, the President of the United Society of Christian Endeavor, and to present to him the wish of that Conference that he might become interested in this movement. Mr. Capen met with a most gracious reception and probably had something to do with the shaping of the Society's policy. On March 15, 1899, Dr. Clark and those associated with him wrote a letter to the Christian Endeavorers of the world asking them to devote some of their energies to this great movement. He especially recommended to the young people of this country to petition Congress in behalf of peace. Mr. Capen felt confident that this was the way in which the Peace Movement was to be made to triumph. It was not by letting a few people in Boston and a few more in Philadelphia and Baltimore do the work. Each man was to be a center for radiating influence and power in his own circle until the cause should triumph.

There were certain aspects of the question to which he devoted himself in public address and in newspaper articles with great enthusiasm. First, he attacked the evil from the side of economic waste. "It is a sad fact," he said, in his Portland address, "that sixty-seven per cent of the expenses of our Government are being expended

either because of past wars or in preparation for possible future wars. It has been well illustrated by a man having an income of one thousand dollars a year who is spending six hundred and seventy to pay for the expenses of former fights, or in preparation for new ones, and is leaving himself only three hundred and thirty dollars for house-rent, food, clothing, fuel and the education of his children. Last year the figures showed that the United States spent on preparations for future war a per capita of three dollars and thirty cents. Of this total sum, we Congregationalists have had to pay over $2,250,000 or three times as much as we have given for foreign missions. The condition across the sea is even worse than it is with us. The annual German expenditure is $731,000,000, and of this, $318,000,000 is spent for war expenses in one way or another. It is said that every farmer in Germany is burdened with the equivalent of the maintenance of six non-producing men in arms. Four million men are under arms in Europe at an annual expense of $1,682,000,000, thus absorbing the life of these nations. If these conditions can be changed, and the fear of war removed by arbitration agreements, not only will the bulk of these immense sums be saved, but these men themselves could be returned to the ranks of peaceful citizens and perhaps be able to earn as much besides. We need courts of arbitration and of world peace to save the nations in the social revolution that is going on. The world is full of labor strikes and men ask for larger wages because of the increased cost of living.

With the total debts of about $27,000,000,000 and an annual interest charge of nearly $1,000,000,000, the nations of Europe are running into universal bankruptcy. All the nations of the earth are so closely interwoven that a disaster to Europe would be a tremendous blow to us, followed by a panic and disaster which would seriously impair all missionary enterprises. Not only that, but in order to keep up in the race our Government is increasing its battleships at an enormous cost. The Massachusetts Commission on the High Cost of Living properly included militarism, and the waste and the expense which is the natural result, as one of the chief causes."

He was equally earnest in attacking the delusion which is common among us that it is necessary to have a war every few years in order to create heroism; that our young men will lose their virility unless there is some contest. He believed that men ought to recognize the fact that it is just as great to sacrifice to save as to destroy; that the noblest heroism is not necessarily exhibited on the field of battle, but may be shown in more quiet ways. "I venture to say that Herbert Welsh contending against the iniquities of the 'Indian ring,' or Clinton Rogers Woodruff fighting political corruption, is just as much a hero as a man on the battlefield, and that Theodore Roosevelt, when he stood at the head of the Police Commission and contended for righteousness and law, was doing as much for humanity as when he led the rough-riders at San Juan. This is where we can all help to create public opinion. We can teach that there

are glorious deeds to be done along the line of peace and that, if we can secure national peace through universal arbitration and a permanent court of the nations, our young men can be turned from thoughts of war to the great questions that are waiting to be solved."

It was his keen insight into what Christianity ought to mean in the life of nations that made him alive to the fact that Christianity had not only failed to touch the real heart of nations, but that the Christian nations of the earth, through their greed and selfishness, had become one of the chief obstacles in Christianizing the Orient. He saw what England, a so-called Christian nation, had done to China. In 1840, China destroyed a few chests of opium that England had tried to force upon her and then England compelled the Chinese, at the mouth of cannon and against every principle of justice, to admit opium into all her ports, thus becoming the leading factor in the poisoning of a great people.

He saw what the so-called Christian Empire of Germany had done to China. In 1897, two German Catholic priests were killed in two of the Shantung provinces. Out went the German fleet and took Kiao-Chau harbor, a large section of country, the right to develop all mines and railways in that province, and a large indemnity besides. A little later, to add to her previous unchristian action, England stepped in and helped herself to Wei-Hai-Wei. He saw that "Christian" France had treated "heathen" China in the same way. He saw that after the Boxer uprising in

1900 not only had hundreds of Chinese women of the upper class committed suicide rather than live after the indignities they had suffered at the hands of Christian nations, but that these same Christian nations had compelled an indemnity of $333,900,000. This thing had continued for years, until China, with a coast line that would reach from Eastport, Maine, to the Panama Canal, had hardly a harbor left, robbed of the opportunities of commerce by the nations who were sending her missionaries. He heard Turkey, that fanatical land of the Mohammedan, offering to submit her grievances with Christian Italy to any tribunal Italy would care to name. Italy refused and stole from Turkey the land of Tripoli.

When Mr. Capen made his address on "Foreign Missions and World Peace," in Portland, he quoted this significant paragraph from the "Japan Advertiser" of Tokio: "The first act of the Persian tragedy is that the Persian people are guilty of the unpardonable crime of possessing a magnificent country with magnificent resources, and this crime constitutes the crime of crimes which Christian Europe, armed to the teeth, can neither condone nor overlook. From the danger signals that are already flashing forth it is easy to foresee that the victory of Russia and England over Persia will not only mean the subjugation of a practically unarmed nation by two fully armed powers, but the present triumph, if it does come, will surely contain an aftermath, which will have to be reaped by the victors. The world is accustomed to associate Russia with merciless and des-

potic barbarism. The case will, however, be different for England, one of the two makers of the Persian tragedy. British prestige must undoubtedly come out of this transaction heavily besmirched; and in the background of England's Empire, India, British justice must come to be looked upon askance and British reputation must suffer as it has never suffered yet. It is well also that missionaries and supporters of Christian missions to the 'heathen' should know that the Oriental mind now defines Christianity as battleships, cannons and rifles, devised and constructed for the plunder of the earth, and that the bleeding figure on the cross which missionaries hold up to the view of non-Christian peoples gets blurred out of their sight, for on their horizon looms largely the figure of the armed robber with cannon and rifles leveled, threatening 'your country or your life.' "

It is this fact, growing out of the greedy spirit of Christian nations, that has become the greatest obstacle to the progress of Christianity throughout the earth. Mr. Capen saw that it put the missionary upon the defensive, making it incumbent upon him to explain why so-called Christian nations should be guilty of such high-handed proceedings, that it identified Christianity in the eyes of the Orientals with power and big guns and that the Kingdom of God could never come on the earth until the war spirit should be killed and nations should become Christian indeed.

A little while before he started on his journey around the world, he made an address in which he

expressed a protest against several public movements of today looking toward an increase in the spirit of militarism. First he opposed the tendency toward making state militia more and more a part of the reserve forces for the regular army. He objected to this chiefly upon the ground that it stirs up unduly the spirit of war among hosts of our citizens and plays mischief with public thought. He believed that if the United States behaved herself she would have no fear about any attack being made upon her. The militia had been a state organization to be used only in the case of riot or disorder and he believed that, as lovers of peace, we ought to oppose this plan for the centralization of the volunteer militia in our various states.

He was equally interested in securing a modification of the Panama Canal Bill. The original intent was that the canal should be a great world water-way for commerce and also should make an easy passage for our navy from one coast to the other, thus making a smaller navy possible for defense. The passage of this bill, exempting our coastwise shipping from tolls, he believed to be a piece of bad faith which has damaged our nation at home and abroad. He thought it a clear violation of our treaty with England and he maintained that, if we needed to subsidize our shipping, we ought to do it directly and in the open and not jeopardize our national honor. Especially did he protest against the spirit represented by one of our distinguished senators, who declared that he would never submit the question to the Hague Tri-

bunal. He believed this spirit to be against the example of our leadership in arbitration and to represent an attitude that was purely selfish—an attitude that was truly unworthy of a great Christian nation.

He joined, also, in the protest against fortifying the Panama Canal, believing that it should be neutralized like the Suez. The latter is in the very war center of the world and yet all these years it has never been fortified and no one has ever touched it. "If there had been fortifications they might have been attacked; such fortifications would have invited attack. For us now to fortify the Panama Canal seems to me to be contrary to the whole spirit of the past."

He urged that all good people should stand together and oppose the present tendency to increase our navy to a size far beyond the needs for defense. When David Starr Jordan went to Japan a few years ago as representative of the World's Peace Foundation, he was cordially received by that nation, but it was significant that the press of Japan criticized conditions which prevailed in the lands he represented, emphasizing the fact that, while these nations were constantly holding their great peace congresses and sending out peace workers, they continued to increase their equipments for war. It is important that these international conferences be held, but Mr. Capen was of the conviction that much of their work is undone by the fact that these same nations continue to build their battleships and that if we should take the initiative and call a halt in our

great expenditures the world would soon follow us. "No nation ever built up a great army or navy that sooner or later did not get into war; peace which depends upon force to preserve it will never last."

No group of men working for a great moral cause have lived to see their faith so nearly realized as this company who met at Mohonk year after year. Not that wars have been abolished; but the peace sentiment has been widely diffused. The business men of the world, excepting the inventors of the instruments of war, and those who make capital out of armies and navies, are demanding peace.

The delegates to Mohonk were at first largely professional men, editors of newspapers, ministers and workers in reform movements. There were few business men in the membership. Mr. Capen was exceedingly helpful in increasing the number of business men at this Conference, and devoted much of his energy toward interesting Chambers of Commerce throughout America in the cause; and he had the profound satisfaction of seeing about two hundred Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce endorsing President Taft's treaties on arbitration.

From so small a beginning in 1895, this peace movement had taken such a hold upon the business men of the world that at the Fifth International Congress of Chambers of Commerce, held in Boston in 1912, the question of arbitration was given a large place both by foreign and American dele-

gations. They had come to recognize that all business and financial interests are thrown into chaos by anything that interrupts the peace of the world. This Congress was one of the most important meetings of business men that the world had ever seen, and it was a great moment when, under the leadership of the President, M. Canon-Legrand, a resolution which he had drawn covering the whole field of international arbitration was passed with intense enthusiasm—so great indeed that the members of the Congress stood on their chairs and waved their hats. It was a message of the commercial leaders of forty-five nations to the governments of the world.

While we have written of Mr. Capen's work for peace in connection with the Chamber of Commerce and the Mohonk Conference, we must not forget that he was also President of the Massachusetts Peace Society and a director of the World Peace Foundation. As President of the former organization he gave much of his time, both in committee work and in public utterance, to furthering its principles; and on his last journey to India and China he went as an official representative of the Peace Foundation. He wrote many enthusiastic letters from India indicating the spread of the peace idea and the eagerness with which men listened to the plea for the abolition of war in favor of arbitration.

## CHAPTER IX

## PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN BOARD

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions has always enlisted in its service the strongest men of the Congregational churches. Its first President was John Treadwell, Governor of Connecticut, and the noble succession has included such leaders as Mark Hopkins and Richard Salter Storrs, men who have represented, both intellectually and spiritually, the best religious life of our nation. During the one hundred and three years of the Board's history, there have been only eight Presidents, four of whom were laymen and four clergymen. The laymen have served a total of fifty-five years and the clergymen forty-five years. A Vice-President served three years. The shortest term of service was that of the fine-spirited minister of the First Church of Hartford, Rev. Charles M. Lamson, who was elected in 1897 and was permitted only two years of leadership before death brought his work to a close.

For the Board to continue this succession of great men was no easy task. The memory of Dr. Richard Storrs was fresh in the minds of its constituency, and the traditions of Dr. Mark Hopkins still so exalted the office of President that it was difficult to find any man who could meet the demands which had been set so high.

In 1899, at the annual meeting of the American Board, held that year in Providence, Rhode Island, Samuel B. Capen was elected President. Though he had gained wide experience in church and civic affairs, he hesitated before accepting this new honor. He knew what were the traditions that must be upheld, and moreover he felt himself inadequately informed on the foreign missionary problem. He had always been a liberal giver to the work, and since 1883 had been a corporate member of the Board; but, absorbed in other phases of church activity, and especially in the problems of the city, he had not given attention to the special problems confronting the foreign missionary nor to the questions of administration. He realized also the greatness of the work, believing that the presidency of the Board was the highest office the Congregationalists could bestow upon any of their number. Repeatedly in after years he has said, when speaking of the widely-extended and diversified activity of the Board, "Surely this is the greatest work in the world." He felt this from the time when he was suggested for the presidency, and he questioned his ability to undertake the great task.

Once he consented to the election, he took his conspicuous position with solemn seriousness, feeling that he had been called of God to lead the work of establishing His Kingdom unto the uttermost parts of the earth. Those who have been closest to him during the intervening years know how conscientiously he has obeyed this call.

Immediately after election Mr. Capen undertook the tasks before him in a manner that had characterized the work of no other President of the Board. This distinctive method of administration was due in part to the fact that he lived in Boston, but chiefly to the operation of one of the fixed principles of his life. He would never accept any office to be a figurehead. He would enter upon a task only with the understanding that he could become a vital part of the work, throwing into it the whole force of his personality and contributing to its guidance his wisdom and strength.

The rules of the American Board made its president and vice-president *ex-officiis* members of its Prudential Committee, the body which controls and directs its work, both at home and abroad. Mr. Capen, immediately after election, began to attend the weekly meetings of this Committee, to contribute to the direction of affairs and to the shaping of policies. Not only did he give to the office a meaning that it had never had, but he became a vital factor in the organization and his activity was second only to that of the secretaries, who devoted all their time to the work.

Through this close association with the Prudential Committee, he brought to the work of the Board the same keen business insight as he had shown in the Sunday School and Publishing Society and other organizations. Through his efforts some departments were entirely reorganized, becoming more efficient and economical.

Those who were accustomed to attend the an-

nual meetings of the American Board can never forget the dignity and grace with which Mr. Capen presided, the ease with which he carried through crowded programs, nor the strictness with which he held every speaker to his time, forbidding him to steal the minutes alloted to the man who was to follow him. He was a prince among presiding officers, uniting firmness with courtesy and combining a thorough knowledge of parliamentary procedure with a kindly human spirit.

By this combination of qualities he was able to accomplish needed reforms in these annual gatherings. It had been customary to have the secretaries read their reports, though they were printed and in the hands of the people, and then to have long reports upon the reports. Noted divines were invited to deliver eloquent orations on what they thought about missionary problems, and as most of them usually exceeded their time limits, those in attendance generally had no opportunity to listen to the missionaries themselves, whom they really wanted to hear. Mr. Capen was largely instrumental in abolishing the reading of the reports of the secretaries and in holding speakers to the time assigned to them. He proved himself the friend of the missionaries by giving them an opportunity to deliver the messages they had brought from the foreign lands with the hope and the prayer that they might touch the hearts of the friends at home and awaken greater interest in their work.

His bearing upon the platform and his manner of speech were so full of sympathy that he gave courage and strength to those who were to speak. James D. Taylor of Impolweni, Africa, in a letter written after Mr. Capen's death, bore beautiful testimony to this trait: "I shall never forget how I was heartened for my speech at the Board Meeting in Brooklyn, by the hearty hand-clasp and cheering word with which he drew me to the desk and presented me to the audience. It was just the right thing to make a man forget himself at the moment when it was most necessary and most difficult to do so."

A similar testimony is received from one of our missionaries in Turkey, Miss Clara Richmond, who is supported by the Central Church of Jamaica Plain. Referring to the time when she was compelled to meet the Prudential Committee, in anticipation of her appointment to the mission field, she writes: "Although my heart was full of the desire to come and live my life for our work here, as I thought of what our American Board stands for, and of what a great force it is in the world, I was almost overwhelmed with the thought of being a part of such a great organization and work. For a moment I was overwhelmed with fear. Can I do and be what a missionary of this Board must do and be? Just then I reached Dr. Capen as we were being introduced to the members. As my name was given to him, putting his hand on my shoulder he said, 'Oh, yes, this is our girl!' That may have been a small thing

compared with the many greater things he did, but it meant so much to me. Such a gladness came and the fear went. I felt that God would give strength and everything needed."

Mr. Capen had a profound belief that the rapid conversion of the world had become a question of money, and he felt that he was himself called by God in a special way to press this phase of missionary work upon the conscience of the American people. A few months after his election to the Presidency of the Board, he wrote to Mr. Mott: "For twenty years I have been praying and writing and speaking about this money problem, and it has become a passionate desire that somehow the Lord may use me to help toward the larger things which are perfectly within the power of the Church to accomplish."

Those who knew him personally understood how earnestly he gave his attention to this problem, and those who have read his published addresses will find this the theme that is ever to the front, presented with all the power of great conviction. One of his strongest and most telling appeals was made before the National Council at Syracuse in 1895, when he uttered his plea for denominational loyalty, showing that only a little more than one-half of the gifts of the members of his Church went to the support of the Congregational missionary societies. Not less than $1,000,000 was contributed outside of recognized denominational channels, and while some of this was devoted to the most worthy purposes, much

of it fell into the hands of religious tramps and was frittered away. "Good business and common sense declare," said Mr. Capen, "that money given to our own missionary societies, whose work is publicly and constantly open to review by a whole denomination of givers, is the least likely to be wasted and the most likely to bring permanent results. It is self-evident that the men who care for our societies, and whose home and field secretaries and missionaries are experts in their various lines, can invest money for Christ's Kingdom to better advantage than the inexperienced. There is something very attractive, I know, to a certain class of minds in the appeal not to be narrow and sectarian in their gifts, but such breadth is usually at the expense of efficiency. The money, if not wholly wasted, might be used to better advantage."

In his annual address in 1901, delivered at Hartford, Mr. Capen presented a plan which he thought would increase the gifts of the Board. If three hundred thousand members of Congregational churches, or less than one-half of its total membership, were to give on an average three cents a day for missionary work, the total amount secured would be over three million dollars annually, or nearly twice what was being given at that time. When he thought of the men who were giving hundreds and thousands of dollars every year to this work, such a small individual average seemed to him entirely within the ability of the Church. Apparently it was simply a question of

method, and method had largely been lacking throughout the churches. Public appeals were good, but they were not sufficient. A nickel or a dime satisfied the conscience of men when the contribution plate was passed. Pastoral and church committee circulars were good, and, when wisely used, had often doubled and trebled the contributions of the churches; but every one has a waste-basket, and people not interested in missions find it very easy to consign all such circulars to this receptacle.

Mr. Capen believed that the churches should go further than these methods by making personal appeals through some of their members—for they cannot easily be put into waste-baskets. He argued that: "Our churches should enter upon some plan of systematic organization with the purpose of reaching by personal canvass every member of our churches, securing from each one a definite pledge for our missionary work. The church must be as earnest in its efforts as business men are in theirs, if it is to have the means to properly carry on its missionary work. Other people are canvassing for everything under the heavens. Our churches cannot sit still in the old way and trust people to give when the day arrives for taking the annual contribution. They must be personally asked to make a pledge worthy of themselves, bearing some fair proportion of their ability to give, and worthy of the Master whom they serve."

With his practical business insight and experience, he realized that if men were to give in any

large amount they must know the needs. Hence he urged upon the leaders a greater definiteness in the missionary appeal. In writing to Mr. Mott he said:

"We want, somehow or other, to get the facts of what is possible to be done, if we had the money, before men who have the money to give. I have been led perhaps to feel the force of this because of an experience which I had over ten years ago, when a member of the Boston School Committee. I was elected at a time when there had been very great neglect in the matter of new school buildings. There seemed to be a studied attempt to stifle our public schools by cutting off their supplies. I remember that almost the first thing I did was to look up the figures, and I found that the City of Boston was appropriating at that time less for buildings than it had been ten years before, while the expenditure for sewers had gained one hundred and fifty per cent and the paving department two hundred and fifty per cent. I presented these facts publicly; they were taken up by the press, and an ex-mayor, in self-defense, attacked me over a fictitious name. We had a contest through the press and the facts got before the people. The result was that the next four years we had two million dollars appropriated for new buildings. Now it seems to me that if we could in a similar way present, in a clear light, how many native pastors and teachers could be employed, how many schools could be opened, hospitals built, etc., with increased money at our

disposal, the appeal would have force. In other words, would it not be possible for the representatives of the different societies to make a great comprehensive plan together, making a budget costing millions, if you please, showing how it would be possible, during the next twenty years, to cover the whole world? Do you not believe it is possible that with a well-thought-out plan of this sort we might interest some very worthy men to a very much larger extent than they have been interested in the past? Has not the time come for a little more audacity in our work? If only God would touch some man's heart and lead him to give a million dollars for foreign missions, or even a quarter of it, I believe others would follow. Giving might become as contagious as meanness."

Being a business man, Mr. Capen naturally looked upon the missionary problem from a business point of view. In 1905, at the annual meeting of the American Board, in Seattle, Washington, he presented an argument for foreign missions which had never before been offered to that body. It brought considerable criticism upon him; not because anyone questioned the sincerity of his motive, but because the argument itself had in it a commercial ring, which offended some who did not consider the purpose which gave it birth. Mr. Capen suggested that only as we develop missions shall we have a market in the Orient which will demand our manufactured articles in sufficient quantities to match our increased facilities for

production. It is the Christian man, he declared, who is always the customer of the manufacturer; the heathen or the non-Christian, as a rule, has very few wants. Trade follows the missionary rather than the flag. "When a heathen man becomes a Christian," said Mr. Capen, "he wants everything new. He wants the conveniences of a Christian home; he wants a Christian plow. When he is changed within, his environment must be changed."

In support of his argument he offered a wealth of illustrations. "When our missionaries arrived in Hawaii, in 1820, the people were only one stage above the brute. Under the teachings of the missionary, and the influence of Christianity, they were so far developed that at the end of twenty years their business with the United States, as shown by the tables which I studied recently in the Boston Chamber of Commerce, was as follows: Imports, $227,000; exports, $67,000; total trade with the Islands, $294,000."

"A few years ago a missionary in the Eastern Turkey Mission, seeing the waste and loss to the natives because of the destruction of their cotton, due to their rude methods, sent to America for a cotton gin. As a result, in that region, there are today ten of these machines at work. He also saw their loss in grain, because it was often kept for weeks waiting for a breeze to winnow it. To prevent this, he sent to America for a winnowing machine, and now there are in that one locality a hundred such machines.

"Without multiplying illustrations, I think what I have said indicates how the missionary is making business for our American merchants. The story is told of a pastor who tried to interest one of his business men in foreign missions, but without avail. The man was a large manufacturer of plows, and one day the minister persuaded his parishioner to visit one of these foreign nations where our missionaries are at work. The result of it was that the manufacturer opened up so much business that he is today supporting four missionaries; and yet the market for plows is so great that the salaries of these missionaries are only a fraction of his profits from this field. Of course, it would have been far better for this man to have become interested in missions from the higher motive of loyalty to Christ and because of the needs of men. But failing here, it was better for the pastor to interest the man through the lower and selfish motives. To prevent any possible misunderstanding, it ought to be said emphatically that it is no part of the business of the missionary to develop foreign commerce. He is not interested in selling modern machinery; his one thought is to help and save men. But from his work of Christianizing and educating men and planting Christian homes these other results follow as inevitably as the mist disappears before the rising sun."

It was easy for men to misjudge this argument. On the surface it seemed unworthy and lacking in altruistic motives. Some people who did not know

Mr. Capen personally felt that he was placing missionary work on a commercial basis and reducing its high purpose to one of pure selfishness. But those who knew him intimately caught the force of his argument. He was interested primarily in winning the strong business men of this country to his cause, and it may be said with truth that few people have been more successful in this work than he. He would make a journey of hundreds of miles to secure a large gift from some wealthy man, or to persuade him to include in his will a bequest to the Board. Men of means had great confidence in his judgment concerning causes that were worthy of help, and this accounts, in part, for the fact that he was able to secure contributions where other men would have failed. He believed that his mission was to the laymen, and the passion of his soul was to lead them to consecrate their money, as well as their thoughts and prayers, to the work of establishing the Kingdom on the earth. A study of his addresses will show that most of them were directed to this end. His arguments were thought out in the counting-room; his facts were gathered from the commercial world. He did not go to literature nor to history for his illustrations; he found them in his conversation with business men, in the reports of the great world of affairs in the daily papers, and all his facts and illustrations and arguments were arranged to appeal to the business man. He seldom had a message directed to ministers. He did not speak primarily to the student

nor to the theologian. He was a part of the great commercial world, and he spoke to those who lived in this world.

This argument for missions must be judged in consideration of this fact, and it probably had more weight with the audience to which it was directed than many more finely conceived spiritual arguments would have had. It did not touch the clergy; it may not have had great influence upon those who were already devoted to the missionary cause. It did, however, interest some men who had to be fed with milk before they would consent to eat meat.

While Mr. Capen felt himself called in a special way to emphasize the financial side of the missionary problem, it would be unfortunate and unfair to leave the impression that he believed the world was to be converted by dollars and cents. He was not all business. He had a rare spiritual sense, lived a life of prayer as do few men of any generation, and believed there was only one name given among men whereby they could be saved. "What we need, today, more than anything else," he said, "is a deeper spiritual life. We shall get the men we need without the slightest difficulty when we are all more faithful 'in the Quiet Hour.' Life is so intense, there is so much to be done, that we do not take time to grow within. The tree must have roots strong and deep, reaching down to the hidden springs, if it would have a sturdy trunk and bear fruit to perfection. The men who give generously, and who have power in the world, are

the men who have first touched God; who, with the world shut out, have been alone with him. The motive of it all will be love to Christ. To quote from Dr. William M. Taylor, 'The Lord did not say, Peter, lovest thou the work? Or lovest thou my lambs? But lovest thou me?' "

If Mr. Capen used the commercial argument when speaking to the uninterested business man, he lifted his whole appeal into the highest realm when he spoke to church people. Looking about him he saw that a large percentage of the members of the Christian Church were entirely indifferent to the cause of missions. "If we ask," he said, "for the definite reasons for such indifference, they may be found in the fact that some men have failed, as yet, to accept the great teachings of the Master in regard to the Kingdom of God on earth. The most superficial reader of the Bible must recognize that his purpose was to found a universal empire. Jews and Greeks had an exclusive religion, and they called the whole world outside of their circles barbarians. Jesus destroyed this by teaching the brotherhood of the whole race and the universality of his religion. There are men in our churches today who call themselves Christians, and yet who tell you with unblushing faces that they do not believe in foreign missions. These people admit their interest in city missions, in home missions, or possibly in work for the Anglo-Saxon race, but that is all. They would feel insulted if you told them that they were as narrow in their thinking as those who lived nine-

teen centuries ago, but that is the exact truth. They stand where the old Jews did in Christ's time, believing that the true religion was only for the Hebrew race, and that the interest of those outside was no affair of theirs. Such a position is absolute disloyalty to the expressed command of Christ."

Many of Mr. Capen's friends often marveled at the zeal with which he would impress the obligation of giving upon the conscience of some man who he believed was not doing what he should in the work of his church. He never failed to approach such a man with his natural grace and courtesy, unless he felt that every argument had been exhausted. Then he would talk, with the sharpness of an Amos, directly to the man's conscience. To one man of wealth he pointed his finger, looking him straight in the eye, and said, "You are robbing God; your money is not your own, and you have no right to keep it as you do." It was this profound belief that men did not own their money which furnished the real basis for all his arguments for giving. In one of his addresses, he said: "There is an entirely erroneous conception about the ownership of money. Men start from the wrong premises, and believe that what they have is their own, and that it is entirely optional whether they give anything or not. You ask for a gift to foreign missions, and they treat your request as they would to buy a ticket for a lecture or a concert, as a matter simply of personal choice or inclination. This is the worst pos-

sible heresy. God said, 'The silver and the gold and the lands are mine.' We, therefore, are not the owners, but only the trustees of what we have, a difference that is almost as great as that between darkness and light. The question then is not, 'How much of mine shall I give?' but, 'What part of God's shall I keep for myself?' It is not what we give, but what we have left, that measures the gift from God's standpoint. Stewardship is the great idea of the New Testament, and the Christian who does not recognize it is, in plain language, stealing trust funds. The money He helps us to make is His money, and how we use it is a test of our discipleship.''

Mr. Capen's greatest argument for missions—the one upon which he loved to dwell—was the spiritual argument. He believed that we must develop foreign missions to save our nation spiritually. He saw that the great peril of America was the materialistic spirit, the passion to be rich at any cost. He once quoted Dr. Charles Cuthbert Hall's word picture of our American civilization, which unfortunately has in it a large element of truth. ''It is a matter of consternation and deep concern to us that the moral standard of American life is deteriorating. In the hustle and bustle of every-day activities, we have astonished the world, but morally we are rapidly going astern, so rapidly that one is dumbfounded at the contrast after a visit to some of the countries of the Old World. I know, from observation, that religion has little, if any, part in our American civilization

today. This is a lamentable state of affairs, and it behooves each and all of us to do all we can to help to stem this tide of indifference. Our home life is not what it should be. Is it to be wondered at, when we realize the general apathy of the people as regards their spiritual welfare?" Mr. Capen, with his keen spiritual insight, saw that the wonderful prosperity of this nation is its peril—that other nations, in centuries past, have declined because they have become prosperous, and wealthy and luxurious. "The antidote to the poison of selfish ease is self-denial. There is no law in the universe more certain than this; wealth that is hoarded is certain to be a curse. If we neglect the needy and think only of ourselves, there must be a decline in our spiritual life. Every man and nation must be interested in foreign missions to save him from narrowness."

There were three convictions which he used as guiding principles in his local church in Jamaica Plain and which he was constantly presenting to other churches. The first was that it is missions that will save the home church as well as the nation. As a result of our great material prosperity, worldliness has crept into our churches, oftentimes weakening their influence; yet they have more serious problems confronting them than they have had for generations. The government of our cities is still in the experimental stage; in many respects it has been a conspicuous failure. We are all working upon one of the greatest tasks of the centuries—that of welding

into one free republic representatives of all nations. If our churches are to meet and help to master these tremendous problems, there must be an awakening of the religious life. Whence will it come? "Not education or culture," said Mr. Capen, "but God in human lives is to be our salvation, and I believe the surest way to have this new religious interest at home, is to be more earnest in our work abroad. It is the self-sacrificing spirit that makes the most forcible appeal. When we get into broader sympathy with the whole world, remember that we are our brother's keeper, and that our brother is the man in greatest need at the ends of the earth, then the blessings the Master gives will come to our own churches at home."

Mr. Capen's second firm conviction was that extravagance is as wrong in the home church as in the life of the individual Christian. He was confident that many of our churches are failing to exemplify the Christ life. Many times he referred to a gentleman in the city of New York who once tried to persuade Dr. A. J. Gordon to spend a Sabbath with him, and as an inducement offered the opportunity of listening to the wonderful five-thousand-dollar quartette in his church. "How much does your church give a year for missions?" was Dr. Gordon's quick response. The man turned red in the face and finally stammered, "About five hundred."

Irony and sarcasm were seldom utilized in Mr. Capen's public utterances. These elements, so

common to the rhetorician, were foreign to Mr. Capen's manner, yet they crept into the tones of his voice and into his language when he referred to those parishes which were spending perhaps twenty thousand dollars upon themselves and only two thousand upon benevolence. He believed that they were untrue to the spirit of the Master and disloyal to his great command.

The third principle upon which Mr. Capen was insistent was that no man should ever be ordained to the ministry or installed over a church who is not earnestly in sympathy with missionary work. "If a man has been settled over a church and seeks to change, I think one of the first inquiries should be as to his attitude toward missionary work. I do not care how sound he may be in his doctrines and confession of faith, so long as he is in his practices unsound. A pastor who does not believe in missions has a flaw in his title. An ambassador represents his sovereign; so a man represents the Christ whom he has promised to serve. It is a downright breach of faith to men out on the firing line to have ministers at home indifferent to the missionary appeal. If they will not bear a hand in the commissary department and help support the army, let them resign. The time has come to make this issue clear and unmistakable. One clergyman said recently to another, who had been spending a great deal of his time in raising a large amount for ornamental windows in his church, 'What are you going to do next? You can't run a church forever on stained

glass windows.' This pointed rebuke, in some form, ought to be spoken to many."

There has been one constant embarrassment in writing this life. Nearly all that Mr. Capen accomplished was done in conjunction with other men. He did not work independently, but through committees and recognized organizations. Yet we have written of him as an individual, trying to present a picture of his personality as it expressed itself through ideas and achievements. We may, at times, have done injustice to his associates, those with whom he labored faithfully, and who often contributed as much as he did toward the final results. It is a fault which seems unavoidable, owing to the nature of the case.

But there was one thing that he did for the American Board which may be called his own creation. He established The Twentieth Century Fund, the purpose of which is to provide against incurring a debt through the uncertain income from legacies. To illustrate this irregularity: receipts of the American Board from legacies in 1892 were nearly $250,000; in 1893 they were $187,000; and in 1899 they were only $102,000. The debt with which the Board started the year 1900 was due entirely to this shrinkage in legacies. The large increase in gifts from the living would have prevented any debt if it had not been for the decline in legacies.

The method had been to use legacies as they were received. Mr. Capen proposed to put legacies into a fund, only one-third of which was to be

spent each year. To effect this change in financial administration, however, it was necessary to create a fund of at least $250,000, and this was to be known as The Twentieth Century Fund.

"To prevent all misunderstanding and make entirely clear the plan in its practical working, let us suppose we have no debt, that the $250,000 was in the fund today and that the current receipts from legacies for this fiscal year were $100,000. This would make the total $350,000, and spending one-third, or $117,000, would leave the fund $233,000 for the next year. Suppose the legacy receipts for 1901 were $150,000, the total would then be $383,000. Spending one-third, or $128,000, would leave $255,000 to carry forward. Suppose now the legacies fall again in 1902 to $100,000. The fund would stand at $355,000, one-third spent would be $118,000, and $237,000 would be carried forward. If in 1903 the receipts were $125,000, the fund would be $362,000. Spending one-third, or $121,000, the fund would remain with which to begin 1904 as $241,000. These figures do not take account of accrued interest on the fund. With this added, the fund would be over $250,000 January 1st, 1904."

If there was ever an example of true, Christian service, it was in the life of this man. He never received a cent of pay for any of his work for his denomination, but gave gladly and lavishly of his time. Men often marveled at his energy. Dr. James L. Barton, Foreign Secretary of the Board, wrote: "His activities in raising money, attending

conferences, holding private interviews, conducting an extensive correspondence, sitting in committees and informing himself on the subject were incessant."

Rev. H. Fairbank wrote to Dr. Edward W. Capen concerning his father's last journey to the mission fields: "Your father worked hard on the way from Colombo to Hong Kong, writing letters and articles and thinking over his addresses. I felt ashamed when I did not feel equal to doing as steady work as he did."

This intense activity, never ceasing, never wasting a minute, grew out of the conviction that "The King's business requires haste"—that if the world is to be won, it must be won in this generation or else, perchance, the opportunity will be lost for centuries. The spirit of the man is revealed in his annual address delivered in Manchester, New Hampshire, in 1903, as much as in any words he ever uttered: "Commerce is going everywhere, and commerce without Christ is a curse. It means firearms and the slave trade and rum. A schooner left Boston for the west coast of Africa with a cargo of rum and gin valued at over $110,000. It has been well asked how many missionary contributions it will take to counterbalance the curse of that cargo. The exports of rum from the United States for the year ending June 30, 1903, were 1,096,719 gallons valued at $1,458,393. Judged by previous years, ninety to ninety-five per cent of this went to Africa. These statistics are a fearful arraignment of our sin as a people. Heathen

nations have not the moral stamina, nor have they Christian surroundings, as we have in America, to help them resist temptation. They need protection because of their weakness. While we are neglecting to send the needed missionaries, our merchants are shipping to them what has been well called 'shiploads of barreled deviltry.'

"Our Western civilization is pressing in everywhere in the East. Scholars in India, China and Japan are seeing the absurdity of what they have been taught; the telegraph and the locomotive are telling the Orient of the superiority of our Occidental civilization. The fearful peril now is that by our delay we shall leave in these educated minds not heathenism, but agnosticism, which is far more difficult to conquer. This is the real peril in India and Japan today, and will be in China in a few years unless we push our work more rapidly. In Africa there is another peril. The Mohammedan College in Egypt is educating its young men by the thousands, and its representatives are going to the Dark Continent in the proportion of 10 to 1 to our missionaries. The easier religion of the Mohammedan, with its low ideals, is especially attractive to the ignorant and degraded African. We recognize here in America what a difference it makes in our frontier places whether the Sunday school or the saloon is first on the ground.

"There is another reason why our work requires haste, namely: to save the lives of our brave men and women who are so fearfully over-

worked. As we have already seen, this great corporation has worked nearly a century, has opened up a great business with unusual success. We have in every mission evangelists, teachers, medical missionaries, etc., a splendid set of men and women who are familiar with every detail, and who are compelled by the exigencies of the case to work overtime and under bad conditions because of our inability to give them the necessary helpers. This is bad business and worse humanity. What makes it harder, they never complain but stay at the front oftentimes until they are ready to drop.

"It ought to strengthen our purpose to reinforce our men in the field to remember the daily sacrifices of our missionaries. In many cases the self-denial at the beginning does not compare with what comes later. I had in my home last Thanksgiving one of the ablest missionaries of our Board and his devoted wife, who sailed within a day or two for their distant field. To all outward appearances they were calm and undisturbed, but we can understand what was going on in their souls when I tell you they were leaving behind them in this country their six children, putting an ocean between them and those they so dearly loved. Let us put ourselves in their places, if we may for the moment, and would not our hearts be torn in anguish at such a sacrifice? The children must remain here in order to be brought up under American conditions, but the price for parents is an awful one. It is not so very long ago

that a missionary whose boat was to sail very early in the morning, put his little ones to bed in their American home. He said 'Good night' and 'Good-bye' to them as bravely as he could; he could not help returning three times after they had fallen asleep to look once more into their beautiful faces before he went thousands of miles away. Is there anything but the love of Jesus Christ that would lead any man to make such a sacrifice as this?''

## CHAPTER X

## MAKING DENOMINATIONAL HISTORY

There is one important phase of Mr. Capen's work which will be of little interest to the general reader, but which is so important in the history of the Congregational churches that it should be embodied in this biography for the sake of those who will wish to follow the development of the denomination. Those who are not interested in technical matters of polity might conveniently pass this chapter.

While the Congregational Church in America may be truly considered as the mother of missions, yet in another sense it has been only in recent years that the denomination has come to the consciousness of the great obligations resting upon it. Its work has lacked unity. Each missionary organization has worked independently, caring for its own separate field. It was only in the last decade of the last century that there was any organized effort to bring the various missionary organizations into unity of action and to make a concentrated appeal to the churches for funds. There was a universal feeling of dissatisfaction among leaders concerning the missionary activities, not because any one distrusted the men at the head of the various organizations, but because it was felt that the denominational machinery was

inadequate and unfit. Leaders believed that there was a waste of energy, a lack of method in work and a failure in concentration, and that while these unfortunate features of administration had been operative in plunging several of the societies into debt the resources of the church members had hardly been touched. Missions were being abandoned, stations were being given up, and the whole work at home and abroad was crippled.

With these conditions confronting the Congregationalists, Mr. Capen set before them at their National Council in Portland, Oregon, in 1898, a comprehensive plan which he believed would bring greater effectiveness into all their missionary work. He argued that as consolidation or federation had become a practical necessity in the business world, so it had become the great need of the Church. "I believe it is time that our six Missionary Societies should come into a closer touch, a practical federation. The foundation of this has been laid in recent years by the secretaries themselves, in meeting once or twice a year to discuss problems which the societies have in common. But far more than this, the work which our Denomination is doing through its Societies should be regarded more as one work, with no divided interests and no rivalry."

As a means to this end, he urged that there should be one annual meeting of these societies in place of three or more separate meetings, to which they had been accustomed, and that a week

or ten days of every year should be given to a joint consideration of their common problems. "As it is now, we see one set of men always at the meeting of the American Board, another at the Home Missionary Society, another at the American Missionary Association. It is too much like the condition of the Apostolic churches: 'one of Paul, another of Apollos, another of Cephas.' We want to change this and have our whole constituency interested in one whole work as being 'all for Christ.' Although much progress has been made in recent years, yet there is an appearance at times of a spirit which looks like rivalry, and the churches sometimes look at the secretaries and field agents as rivals with them. We want to do away with all rivalry by having the whole work planned together, with the amount needed for each society agreed upon each year."

To bring about this result Mr. Capen recommended that a committee of fifteen be appointed to advise with regard to our whole missionary activity. The work of this committee should be to remove the societies from debt, to reach, so far as possible, every Congregational church in the country, to try to enlist each church in the plan of giving something every year to each of the six societies and to organize throughout all the states similar committees, which would, in turn, organize conference committees large enough so that each member would be responsible for not more than five churches. These committees were to develop and have charge of some definite plan of mission-

ary work in the churches in their territory, receiving an offering from each of them, and a gift from every member. Mr. Capen urged furthermore that the general committee appointed by the Council should advise as to the sum of money which ought to be raised for each society, and should apportion this amount among the various states, and through the state conferences among the local churches.

Mr. Capen was aware that this plan for consolidation of the missionary societies was not so radical a proposition as many desired. There was a feeling in many churches that there should be two societies instead of six—one for foreign work and the other for the work at home. "But I have not felt that we were yet prepared for this. The plan I have proposed is as long a step forward as our churches are now ready to make. The more complete union may come later."

As a result of Mr. Capen's proposal, the following resolutions were passed: "Resolved, that we recommend the appointment of a Central Committee on Missionary Work, of fifteen members: six to be appointed by the National Council; one of whom shall be a woman especially interested in home missions; seven to be chosen by the executive committees of our six missionary societies in such manner as they may deem best; one to be chosen by the Woman's Boards of Missions, and one to be selected at the Annual Christian Endeavor Convention by the Congregationalists at their denominational rally. It shall be the duty

of this committee to use all possible efforts to secure the appointment of similar committees in the State Conferences throughout our country, to devise plans for promptly paying the debt of every society, and for offering such increased gifts as shall make it possible to enlarge our work at home and abroad. It shall also suggest such other messages, looking to a closer union in the prosecution of our common work, as may seem expedient, reporting the result of its conclusions to the next National Council.

"Resolved, that this Council at this session choose its five representatives upon the committee, and that they be instructed by us to ask the co-operation of our missionary societies and the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor in selecting the remaining members of the committee as proposed. In this battle with evil all over the world, in which as Congregationalists we wish to bear our full part, every dollar should be invested where it will most speedily provide a permanent church or school for a base of supplies. We ought to push forward in the prosecution of this holy war for righteousness in all the world; close this century and open the next by a grand forward movement all along the line."

Some delay was necessary in the completion of the membership of this Central Committee, but its personnel was finally selected on December 29, 1898. Its first meeting was held in the parlor of the Broadway Tabernacle Church, New York City, on April 19, 1899. As a result of this gath-

ering the Committee prepared a report, urging that there should be chosen: first, by each State Association a committee composed of one member from each conference; secondly, by each local conference a committee of such number that each member should be responsible for not more than five churches; and thirdly, by each church a committee to make some plan best suited to itself for systematic giving.

There was an enthusiastic response to this appeal on the part of the churches, although, true to the Congregational fashion, they were still lacking in unity of action. Each State Association acted according to local needs and to the personal preferences of its leaders. The methods suggested by local churches for systematic benevolences were also varied, but it was evident that there was a very substantial gain in missionary interest. While the plan did not call forth unity of action, it increased and fostered denominational loyalty. It led the churches to feel that their missionary societies were their children and were not to be treated as orphans left to care for themselves in this cold world. It was too much to expect that any plan could be devised that would in a short time bring the Congregational churches together in a proper denominational spirit. But the inauguration of the new system proved that Congregationalists were beginning to feel not only that they had a share of responsibility in winning America and the rest of the world to Jesus Christ, but they also had an obligation to unite for the

accomplishment of the plan formulated by their leaders with this end in view.

The second matter referred to the Central Committee was that of a clearer federation of the missionary societies. They held their first meeting with representatives of the six societies in Hartford, Connecticut, on February 6, 1900. At this conference it was recommended that a committee of nine be formed, one member being selected by the Executive Committee of each of the six societies and the other three being chosen by the first six. This recommendation was adopted and the committee held its first meeting at Hartford on July 6, 1900.

In view of the great gains that had been made in federation and systematic benevolence, Mr. Capen, at the meeting of the National Council held in Portland, Maine, in 1901, urged still further advances in these directions. "We believe that with the opening of the new century the time has fully come when a personal canvass should be made of the whole membership of our churches, to secure from each one some definite pledge for missionary gifts."

As chairman of the Committee of Fifteen on Missionary Work, he presented the following resolutions, which were adopted by the Council: "It is, therefore, Resolved, first, That we urge upon all our churches the importance of laying added emphasis upon the great missionary work at home and abroad to which, as Congregationalists, we are pledged. Resolved, second, That each church

be requested, by a personal canvass, to reach, as far as possible, every one of its members with a direct personal appeal for some gift to each of our six missionary societies. Resolved, third, That our churches, so far as practicable, make the month of October a missionary month. Resolved, fourth, That all our churches should make some provision in their Sunday school and Christian Endeavor Societies for educating our young people in every department of our missionary work. Resolved, fifth, That as the pastors are the great leaders of the church, we urge that in all ordinations and installations the missionary knowledge and interest of the candidate should be a matter of faithful inquiry. Resolved, sixth, That we approve of so much of the report of the committee of nine as recommends the appointment of all salaried officers in our six societies by executive boards; of the plan, so far as practicable, of one administrative head; and of a limited governing membership for each of our home societies. Resolved, seventh, That we would urge the five home societies to try the experiment of a united annual meeting, allowing the meeting of the American Board to remain unchanged for the present. Having two annual meetings each year, one in the East and one in the West, will be one step towards a closer federation of all our missionary work. Resolved, eighth, That we recommend that the executive boards of each of our five home societies consider the proposition of having an advisory committee of seven chosen from their own

number which shall hold stated meetings, and to which all questions having to do with their joint work shall be referred for advice; that with the addition of two representatives from the American Board, this advisory committee take such measures as they deem advisable, looking to the organization in all our conferences and State missionary committees to urge upon the churches the adoption of definite and systematic plans of benevolence, and the appointment of local committees to carry these plans into effect. Resolved, ninth, That we recommend that there shall be two missionary publications, one devoted to foreign work, the other to home work, both of them to be published monthly and to be equal in literary ability and typographical style to the best publications of the day. Resolved, tenth, That we recommend that our missionary societies unite in issuing brief manuals of instruction and information, suitable for permanent use in our Sunday schools, Young People's Societies and other organizations. Resolved, finally, That in memory of our noble ancestors and what they have wrought in doing foundation missionary work at home and abroad, and remembering their enthusiastic belief in the Congregational polity as in harmony with our national institutions, it is for us, their children, to push on to larger service, showing thereby that we are worthy to represent the faith and courage and devotion of the Pilgrims."

This Committee, with Mr. Capen still Chairman, employed the Rev. Charles A. Northrop of

Norwich, Connecticut, as the secretary for the promotion of systematic benevolence. Mr. Northrop's salary was supplied by a gentleman greatly interested in the success of the plan, and he entered upon the duties of his office on March 1, 1904. He gave his time to speaking before State Associations and Conferences and at other similar gatherings at which he could obtain a hearing. He continued his work until the spring of 1906, when the office was discontinued for lack of funds. A little later, however, the Committee took up in a practical way the matter of systematic benevolence and devised and submitted to the churches a plan of apportionment which had great promise. The societies united in supporting it and for the first time in their history their entire work was presented to the churches both as a whole and by the individual organizations. The following resolution, passed by the officers of the societies, indicates the spirit in which the plan was received:

"The secretaries of the national benevolent societies, in conference assembled, wish to express their very hearty appreciation of the recent statement of the Advisory Committee of the National Council and of the plan suggested by that committee whereby all our benevolent work can be considered as a whole, and of the amounts proposed which would need to be raised by each State for the several societies if we are able to secure the two million dollars which our benevolent work at home and abroad imperatively needs."

It is not necessary to trace this history further, as this sketch brings the matter down to the present apportionment plan adopted by the Congregational churches and to the proposals for further unifying the work that were adopted by the National Council in Kansas City in 1913. Many of the leaders of Congregationalism became more radical in their progress than Mr. Capen had been or desired to be, but he, more than any other man, was the father of the plan which has led to such important changes and which seems not yet to have reached the end of its successful application and development.

## CHAPTER XI

## THE LAYMEN'S MISSIONARY MOVEMENT

"It seems to me that there is a fundamental error in the minds of the great majority, as to the supreme business of the church. It is not a religious club for the education and help of the congregation, nor is it primarily for divine worship; its real purpose is to give the gospel to the world. Missions are not a department of the work of the church; they are to be the center of its activities."

This significant utterance brings into marked contrast Mr. Capen's high ideal of the program of the Church and the actual condition which exists in many churches. Only about one man in ten in the membership of the Christian Church is interested in world-wide missions, while the average gift per member is less than one cent a day for missions at home and abroad. The Church, as a whole, has never taken the missionary enterprise seriously.

In view of this condition, Mr. Capen had the profound conviction that the great need was to awaken the men of the churches. To do this he believed that the first great need was to give them an ideal worthy of their manhood, and he was convinced that there was no ideal to be compared with that of the missionary purpose. For the task of missions is nothing less than to give the knowl-

edge of Christ to every man wherever he lives and whatever his conditions. It brings the greatest thought that can ever come to us. "Such a conception of a man's obligation broadens him and furnishes the real antidote to selfishness and littleness and narrowness which make so many lives petty and sordid and unworthy."

In order to give this great vision, Mr. Capen felt that the Church must be more earnest and persistent in furnishing information to those who, in the rush of worldly things, have never gotten the full meaning of life, nor had any adequate knowledge of missionary work. "What men need is not more rhetoric and exhortation but more information." And he believed that one of the best ways to educate men is to secure their personal interest by having them help to plan the work about which they are to be informed.

While these convictions were bearing heavily upon his heart there came a movement which seemed to be an answer to his prayers. Mr. John B. Sleman, a young business man of Washington, while on his way to attend the Student Volunteer Convention of 1906, held at Nashville, Tennessee, conceived the idea that if the Christian business men of North America could be given a vision like that of the students and could be led to follow it with their business sagacity and energy, the slogan, "The evangelization of the world in this generation," might soon pass from dream to realization. After the convention Mr. Sleman, who was a Congregationalist, naturally laid the idea

before Mr. Capen, and he received it with enthusiasm. Conferences were soon held with other men and, on November the fifteenth, 1906, in the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York, The Laymen's Missionary Movement came into existence.

The purpose of the Movement as set forth in the simple charter of the organization was: "To consult with the secretaries of the foreign missionary boards with reference, first, to the production of a campaign of education among laymen to interest them more largely in missions; second, to the designing of a comprehensive plan for the evangelization of the world in this generation; and third, to have a commission of fifty or more business men visit the several mission fields and report their findings to the churches."

When this organization was formed there was never a question in the mind of any member as to who should lead the movement. As Lieutenant-Colonel Halford has said: "There could have been no other chairman but Dr. Capen, as there could have been, and would have been, no successor to him, unless God, Himself, should have decreed the necessity. Never was the preparation of a man for a place of important and unique responsibility more evidently of God. His years of success in business life; his sympathetic and active relationship to the highest movements of civic righteousness, the leadership into which he had come not through any effort of his own, but by the law of natural fitness and selection in the social, educa-

tional, philanthropic, and reformatory movements of his generation; his thorough identification with every phase of the expression of the ideal American citizenship, and the humble conspicuousness with which he adorned the doctrine of God, his Saviour, as an earnest, practical, achieving member of the church of Christ, bespoke him as the elect layman of this new and important duty."

Mr. Capen threw himself into this new organization with unusual zeal, because he believed that we are living in the age which is pre-eminently the time of the layman's opportunity. "The clergyman is no longer held in awe; he is not, as formerly, the only educated man in the community. Our common schools, the cheapness of books and magazines have changed everything and education has become universal. As a result, the layman is in every way far more influential. One hundred years ago school boards were made up, so far as possible, of clergymen; today in our cities they are almost exclusively laymen. I presume it would have been but little short of sacrilegious to have had anyone but a clergyman president of Yale; now it seems most natural to have a layman like President Hadley. Princeton has followed in the election of Woodrow Wilson. The layman is wanted as never before in the work of our mission and philanthropic societies. The Y. M. C. A. work is exclusively his. The business man's training is valuable in both organizations and in executive work the layman has come to his full opportunity."

We have already seen how Mr. Capen devoted a large part of his life to an effort to awaken laymen to their responsibilities and opportunities as citizens. In this Movement he devoted himself with even greater earnestness to arousing the laymen of America to their obligations and privileges in that which is the chief work of the Christian Church, seeking to make them feel that they were chosen of God to carry forward his Kingdom. One of our popular story-writers has declared: "There is a whole lot of difference between a great man of wealth and a man of great wealth. Them last is getting terribly common." It is a fine distinction and men are making it in increasing numbers. Many men of wealth are beginning to realize that what has been called success may be fearful failure, and they are not only trying to apply Christian principles in the making of their money, but are also recognizing that their wealth is a trust which they hold for the improvement of the race.

In an address at Northfield, Mr. Capen dwelt at length upon this subject: "The man who gives and the man who preaches are partners together in Christian service and neither can do the work without the other. Not far away in the city of Springfield there have lived three men, George, Charles and Homer Merriam, who have considered themselves as stewards of God, and who have used their great income by large and constant gifts for missionary work. They have distinctly declared that they were in business as stewards

to make money that they might do more for others. They wanted to accumulate that they might give, and there are multitudes of men in our country who, because of their business success and their wealth, are doing untold service in the Kingdom of God. Shall I mention a man who was one of the leading merchants of Boston a few years ago, the Honorable Alpheus Hardy? He started in life to be a minister of the gospel, but he was compelled by ill health to give up his study. For a time his disappointment was bitter, but soon a great light fell upon him; he saw that a sacred calling was still open to him and with rapture he cried, 'Oh, God I can be Thy minister! I will make money for Thee; that shall by my ministry!' Henceforth he felt himself to be God's man, and as much chosen and ordained as those preaching the gospel from the pulpit."

In a concise and businesslike address before the Annual Conference of the Foreign Missionary Boards of the United States and Canada, which met in Philadelphia on January 9, 1907, Mr. Capen set forth the reasons for the existence of this new organization.

"First, because of the inadequacy of present plans and methods of missionary work. In making this statement, I am not failing to recognize the great work that has already been accomplished. We have planted Christian churches and schools and colleges and hospitals and printing plants, and have transformed nations. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that this represents

the work of only a small minority of all church members. We cannot have any patience with a man who argues that we cannot do many times what we are doing now. We have the money in our pockets. There is a perfect mine of wealth in the possession of the rich and of those of moderate means, which is as yet untouched. Am I not right in saying, therefore, that we need to supplement our present methods with something else in order that we may more speedily evangelize the nations? This is the primary purpose of this new movement.

"The second reason for this new organization is the indifference, in pews and pulpit alike, to our foreign missionary work. The missionary message, so far, has not touched multitudes of men in churches, the very ones the movement is designed to reach. We need something radically different from our present plans and methods, because many people do not consider proper proportion in these various gifts. We rejoice in the great benefactions for secular education and philanthropy at home, but the foreign missionary appeal is too often forgotten. There are resources enough for all. Certainly the time has fully come to adopt some new plans which shall give proper place and emphasis to the regular missionary work of our churches. In our new movement we want to make it clear to all that missions are the supreme work of the Church and that money given for work abroad inevitably tends to help and not hinder generous gifts at home. We should recognize as

never before the world-wide opportunity. The doors are open all over the world, and the commercial traveler has entered everywhere. Our business men must have a broader vision that takes in the whole world. Our own spiritual safety requires a more vigorous missionary campaign. America must save the world if she would save herself, and our laymen have it in their power to turn the current of thought in the churches to these higher things. We want to save men, and then we shall have their gifts. We need a great addition to the Christian educational institutions abroad, in order to train more rapidly native teachers. We need more hospitals and more printing and industrial plants. We want what President King of Oberlin has called 'capitalistic statesmen.' "

A definite program, which did not duplicate the work done by any other organization, was outlined for the new Movement. In some respects the work was to be unique in its methods. The Movement was headed by a central committee of one hundred, composed of representatives of various denominations, with an executive committee of fifteen. It was proposed to secure personal pledges, so that men who never before had manifested any interest in missions might come under some positive, definite obligation which would match present-day opportunities and be worthy of themselves and worthy of Christ. While some of the work was to be done through organizations for individual canvassing, the leaders recognized a la-

tent power in social influences. They proposed that men should meet in parlor and dining-room conferences, where they would come into close touch with one another, and where by questions and answers they might be led to consecrate themselves to the great work.

The leaders of the movement planned to secure their money by calling together small groups of men and presenting to them the largeness of the opportunity, and by hand-to-hand work, the method employed for obtaining large gifts for colleges and hospitals in this country. They also proposed to send out a commission of business and professional men, who would visit at their own expense the various mission stations of the world, would see for themselves what was being done, and would then report to the home churches. They believed that such a body of men would do more than could be done in any other way to remove the skepticism which exists concerning missionary work. "There is no lack of money," said Mr. Capen, in speaking for this movement, "for wherever there is an appeal for humanity, a flood in Texas, a volcano eruption in the West Indies, or an earthquake in San Francisco, the result is always the same, generous gifts from rich and poor alike. If we can only make good with our churches at home, there will be money enough to properly support our missionary work." It was with this faith that these consecrated laymen, led by Mr. Capen, launched out in the enterprise of securing princely gifts for this work.

The Laymen's Missionary Movement made its chief appeal to men who were accustomed to see things in the large. It never failed to present the missionary problem so that it looked to men like a "man's job," a call to finance the work on a scale of $1,000,000,000. It was this point of view that reached hundreds of men who had hitherto looked upon missions as a task for women. Mr. Capen's addresses were full of illustrations showing the strength of the masculine appeal. Let me give but one.

"One of our secretaries tried to reach recently one of the strongest men in the city, but it was impossible for him to get by his private secretary. He then tried him on the telephone and succeeded in reaching him in that way. He asked for an interview, and the man declined. He said, 'I will ask you for only three minutes.' The man replied, 'I am too busy to give you even that'; and the secretary replied, 'I am busy also.' The man then asked, 'What do you want?' The answer came, 'I want to see you about the Laymen's Missionary Movement and the conquest of the world.' The man replied, 'Come along, I have time enough for that.' In another of our cities, one of our former mayors and also a judge of the United States Court were willing to make a personal canvass for missions. The judge of the Court of Claims, a Cleveland man, was chairman of the committee of arrangements and closed his court for two days in order to take a message in the name of the Laymen's Missionary Movement

to the City of Richmond. I believe that it can truthfully be said that there was never a movement that has discovered the leading men of the churches as this Laymen's Movement has already done. It is bringing the laymen to have a larger share in Christian work, for when they have become interested in foreign missions they become interested in other forms of church work. It is bringing their business and professional training to use, as well as leading them to make larger gifts."

During the first two years after the organization of the Laymen's Missionary Movement, great progress was reported in many parts of the country. In eighteen cities in the South and West, and upon the Pacific Coast, men met together and voted to increase their foreign missionary gifts. In Canada a similar campaign was waged in seven cities, and as a result of it many givers voted to treble their missionary offerings. In these Canadian cities the gifts included home as well as foreign missions, as most of the denominations there have but one society instead of several. In each of at least four cities in the United States, one denomination gave more than all the churches of the city together had given the previous year. In St. Joseph, Missouri, the churches voted to increase their gifts from $12,000 to $50,000. In the city of Atlanta one church that gave $1,875 in a previous year secured pledges for $8,000. A congregation in St. Louis that gave $500 one year, by personal work on the part of the men raised their

offering to $2,000. In a year of business depression the Southern Presbyterians increased their foreign mission offerings from $276,000 to $323,000.

But these gifts were the smallest part of the benefit secured from The Laymen's Missionary Movement. Its campaigns inspired churches to organize their men for better service in years to come. One of the first to organize was the Presbyterian Church, South, which adopted as its motto, "All at it and always at it, and a million annually for missions." They placed a strong representative in each of their eighty-three presbyteries, with the understanding that he was to secure in every congregation in his division one strong layman who would act as a leader of the men's missionary activity in his own church.

While this movement was leading strong men to give larger service to churches, it led them also into a life of more frequent and earnest prayer. "Men are becoming more and more conscious that it is the most real and the most reasonable thing in the world for men to talk with God. The organization for foreign missions in this country started from a prayer meeting at Williamstown. This Laymen's Missionary Movement in its turn, one hundred years later, was born in a prayer meeting in New York. All the meetings of the movement since, have been in the spirit of prayer. It has developed the prayer life in multitudes of men. They are no longer saying prayers but praying. I was very much touched two years ago at Chat-

tanooga, when I spoke before one thousand men of the Methodist Church, South, that in a letter it was stated that 'twenty thousand of the people are praying for you.' Many difficulties have come to us, but in the most marvelous way they have been removed in answer to our prayers."

Possibly the most important work that The Laymen's Missionary Movement accomplished was that done in the Dominion of Canada. There was a vigorous campaign in all the principal cities, from Halifax to Vancouver, which resulted in a Canadian National Congress of The Movement at Toronto, March 31 to April 4, 1909. Over twenty-five hundred laymen were registered as commissioners, and fifteen hundred ministers attended. It is probably true that never before in modern history have so many representative men of the Christian Church come together in the interest of world-wide missions. This Congress adopted a national missionary policy, embodied in these resolutions: "We recognize the clear duty of the churches of Canada to evangelize all those in the Dominion, all who come to our shores, who have not been led to the Christian Church, and also to provide for the adequate preaching of the gospel to 40,000,000 souls in the non-Christian world.

"We accept the estimates of our missionary leaders, that at least $1,300,000 annually should be contributed to our home missionary work, and $3,200,000 annually by the churches represented in this Congress aggregating a communicant membership of 900,000."

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, organized a Laymen's Missionary Movement and had eleven hundred delegates at its first convention at Chattanooga, where it fixed as its goal $3,000,000 annually. The South Baptist Church also organized its laymen and proposed to increase its missionary offerings to half a million. The Intersynodical Foreign Missionary Convention of the Presbyterian Church, North, held a meeting at Omaha and a second one in Philadelphia. Both of them voted to recommend to their churches to raise, on an average, five dollars per member for foreign missions.

Thus a mighty power in reshaping the lives and policies of men came into existence. Mr. Capen believed that this Movement among the laymen of America would furnish the moral equivalent for war. "Foreign missions give us that equivalent in their spirit of conquest, and in the courage and sacrifices they call forth. We work to mobilize the men of today for the last great struggle. We believe that they are going to swing into line with such reserves of money as was not dreamed of a few years ago. Our times are full of 'big things.' I like the word 'big' rather than 'large'; it is a much stronger word. We see how the Pennsylvania Railroad can tunnel the Hudson River and have great terminal facilities in New York at an expense of fifty or one hundred million dollars. Similar enterprises are going on all about us. We are coming to a better time in missions. The day of formal praying and petty giving is about over.

The day of great consecration and self-sacrifice is at hand."

In The Laymen's Missionary Movement all differences of creed were forgotten and men united in a common work. "Men are beginning to realize as never before the solidarity of the race, that our world is our home, that we are children of one father, that the barriers are now down, and that it is possible to reach all our father's children throughout the whole world very quickly. It has been well said, 'The nineteenth century made the world a neighborhood.' The twentieth century must make it a brotherhood."

## CHAPTER XII

## WELLESLEY COLLEGE AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

At the time of his death Mr. Capen was President of The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, President of The Massachusetts Peace Society, Director of The World Peace Foundation, Director of The Charlesbank Homes, Vice-president of The American Bible Society, Chairman of The Board of Trustees of Wellesley College, Trustee of The United Society of Christian Endeavor, Chairman of The Finance Committee of The United Society of Christian Endeavor for the erection of its new building, Director of The Boston City Missionary Society, Vice-president of The Congregational Sunday School and Publishing Society, Chairman of The Laymen's Missionary Movement, Director of The North American Civic League for Immigrants, member of The Boston Indian Citizenship Committee, member of The Committee on Municipal Affairs of The Boston Chamber of Commerce, Vice-president of the American Congregational Association and Vice-president of The Consumers' League of Massachusetts.

Even this list of varied offices, appalling as it seems when measured by the energy of the average man of today, does not represent all the serv-

ice that this consecrated Christian was giving to the world. It must not be forgotten that to the last of his life Mr. Capen was a business man. While he sold his interest in the firm of Torrey, Bright and Capen in 1909 and retired from the confining work of the carpet industry he was engaged in active business enterprises until the end, especially carrying the heavy responsibility of several large estates for which he was trustee. There were, however, certain activities to which he gave so much of his time that an account of his life would be incomplete if it did not make brief mention of them.

A large part of Mr. Capen's life was associated with the cause of education. Though his book training did not extend beyond the high school, he was honored with the degree of Master of Arts by Dartmouth College and received the title "Doctor of Laws" from Oberlin and Middlebury. He gave much of his energy to the Boston schools, to the colleges connected with his denomination and to Wellesley. A Wellesley trustee, Mrs. Frank Mason North, has given such an excellent account of his connection with this institution that we cannot do better than to embody it in this biography.

"Forty years ago," she writes, "beneath the oaks of Wellesley, Mr. and Mrs. Durant placed the foundation stone of the College, upon which was written, 'This building is humbly dedicated to our Heavenly Father, with the hope and prayer that He may always be first in everything in this

institution; that His Word may be faithfully taught here; and that He will use it as a means of leading precious souls to the Lord Jesus Christ.' With a College thus 'founded for the glory of God and the service of the Lord Jesus Christ,' and enshrining within it both the love of learning and the joy of serving, Dr. Capen must always have been in sympathy. To it he entrusted his only daughter, and when in 1900 the College sought the aid of his counsels he became an honored Trustee. The pre-eminence of which he was ever unconscious was at once evident to his colleagues and in 1905 he was chosen President of the Board of Trustees. No office was to him a sinecure; no title was merely honorary. Every opportunity of helpfulness he 'filled up to the brim.' He became the Chairman of the Executive Committee, which is constantly at its task, and a member of the Finance Committee, upon which large responsibilities must always rest. Whenever special needs called for special service, the finding of a new President of the College, the raising of a million dollars, he quietly, generously, cheerfully carried a large share of the burden.

"In the last half century the type of college trustee has greatly altered. Formerly the clergymen, eloquent and learned, were the typical administrators, now the business man, alert, practical, swift in judgment, wealth-commanding, is sought for the large office. In President Capen there was a remarkable blending of both types,

so that he was the ideal Trustee of a great college. His fervent prayers were a benediction upon young hearts, as each class paused at college altars for a farewell service before going forth into the wide world. His eloquent addresses enkindled the enthusiasm of the Alumnæ, with whom on festal days he was an eagerly-welcomed guest. When the call came for generous giving, his was the first response. Without losing sight of the great aims of the college, he devoted time and thought unreservedly to business details and problems, mastering them easily, 'without haste and without rest.' That beautiful courtesy which is the very flower of Christian character, the outward and visible sign of the graces of Christ within, made fellowship with him, even in the most laborious hours, a delight. Upon his wise, well-balanced judgment the President of the college and every member of the Board of Trustees relied. In his quietness and confidence they found strength. Being 'very sure of God,' he was unburdened and unafraid. Because 'he knew and pursued daily the individual road that leads into the presence of God,' he brought to his tasks courage, buoyancy, enthusiasm, efficiency, and that wisdom which is pure, peaceable, gentle, full of mercy and of good fruits.

"It is significant of the dominant traits in his own character to discover what Dr. Capen preeminently valued in the ideals of the college. In a letter to a friend last year, he said: 'I am sure that you know something of the value of Welles-

ley College, the number of whose students has doubled since I became a Trustee twelve years ago, and it now numbers over fourteen hundred. It was founded by Mr. Durant as a great Christian college, with this text as its motto: "Not to be ministered unto, but to minister." The college, I believe, is keeping true to that purpose. While the intellectual equipment is of the very best, the real Wellesley spirit, to live for others, is never lost sight of. One of the very interesting things to me in the life of the college is that wealth and social position do not count against fitness when the students have their own officers to elect. I am, also, glad to write that the missionary spirit is strong in the college. Wellesley women are in all the world, so that we can feel sure that the sun never sets on our work.'

"Dr. Capen took delight in the beauty of Wellesley lakes and lawn and woodland, and in the effervescing life of the thronging girls, 'crowned with youth's white crown of aspiration': he cherished the material prosperity of the college and sought its increase; he counted precious that scholarship which is deep, sincere, reverent, modest, serviceable, the love of truth in nature, in history, in arts, in literature, and in the soul of man. But to him, as to the Founder of the college, the new higher education never meant simply the opening of doors of profound learning to women; it was a summons to a larger service in the Kingdom of God. These words of the Founder might well express his thought: 'The Shekinah

light must shine to the ends of the earth and the light-carriers must be Christian women. I could see the college in ashes, but I could not bear to have it send out only intellectual women, without the radiance and the vitalizing power of the spirit of Christ.' The last message of the Founder might have been his also: 'Christ first in all things and always.' ''

After Mr. Capen's death The Board of Trustees of Wellesley College passed resolutions which not only embodied their appreciation of his excellent service, but which also placed strong emphasis on certain dominant traits of his life.

''Mr. Capen brought to the service of the College all that made him prominent and useful in church and state, devotion to the cause which he served, enthusiasm in his work, mature judgment, and large experience. He was regular in his attendance at meetings of the Board and its various committees and informed himself carefully of the many matters brought before them. With no selfish motive and with rare tact, he contributed largely to the solution of all questions under consideration. Not the least important of his service was his work on the sub-committees, to which were referred many important, and at times, delicate matters of administrative policy, of law, of ethics, and mental problems, which cannot be treated in the infrequent gatherings of the Board, or in the limited time given by the standing committees. As a presiding officer, he was firm,

courteous, influential; at public functions he represented the college with dignity and impressively. The regard and, indeed, affection Mr. Capen commanded from all his associates was due to his personality, and this he carried into his relations with the faculty and students; to them he was a sympathetic friend, as well as a sound adviser. Mr. Capen carried his duties to Wellesley upon his conscience, and we know that many of its problems he took into his closet and made them the subject of prayer. His own judgment did not suffice for him; he sought Divine guidance. His Christian character, unobtrusive and impersonal, created an atmosphere in which he moved and worked."

While Mr. Capen gave much of his energy to general education, it was the Christian college in which his interest centered. He looked to those institutions where Christianity is exalted as the hope of our country. He saw that they supply the majority of the recruits for the mission fields, that from them came very largely the young ministers and those men and women who are ready to sacrifice and suffer for the redemption of the race. With his keen practical sense, he observed that they send out students who have, in addition to trained minds and much information, hearts full of enthusiasm for the coming of the Kingdom of God and who possess the spirit of which martyrs and crusaders are made.

"The safety of the Republic not only depends upon its intelligence, but it is vitally important

that the basis of that intelligence shall be religious. Education without Christianty has left out its chief factor, and the source of the greatest power. You may take a block of marble and chisel it ever so skilfully into some matchless human form, but it is marble still, cold and lifeless. So it is with education without religion; that which gives the life and power and meaning is wanting. We need more men like Senator Hoar, with religious convictions to lead the people in civic matters. While men think and act for themselves, perhaps as never before, yet it is equally true that people are more and more being guided by leaders in whom they have confided. While it is not so blind a leadership as in the early centuries, or in other lands, yet in its intelligence it is just as real. The Christian college is needed to train such men in righteousness. If you want to sustain missions then sustain the Christian college of the newer States, for they furnish the missionaries. From what other sources are men to be obtained who will most intelligently carry the gospel into the hundreds of places west of the Missouri River, where no gospel is preached? If you want Christian teachers, then support the Christian colleges, for they must furnish the teachers for the new States. Where shall we obtain men for our theological seminaries unless we obtain them from our Christian colleges? Statistics show that our State colleges and universities furnish comparatively few men for the theological seminary. Figures obtained a few years ago show that the Christian

colleges furnish ninety-three per cent of these theological students, and there is no reason to believe that there has been any material change. No Christian civilization can exist permanently without a thoroughly educated and Godly ministry, and such a ministry cannot be perpetuated without the Christian college."

It was this conviction which led him not only to give much of his energy to Wellesley and Christian colleges in the West, but also to assume, in 1901, the presidency of the Corporation of the International Institute for Girls in Spain. Mrs. Alice Freeman Palmer had been the President of the Corporation but owing to the condition of her health and because of her many responsibilities she had been compelled to resign the office. She persuaded Mr. Capen to take her place and for several years he entered heartily into the work of this institution which, under the leadership of Mrs. Alice Gordon Gulick, was doing for the young women of Spain what Mt. Holyoke and Wellesley were accomplishing for the women of America. He was especially active in raising money for new buildings the Institute needed and showed wisdom and tact in guiding the Corporation through a time of trying experiences.

One of the most significant organizations developed among men of the modern city has been the Chamber of Commerce. Mr. George S. Smith of the Boston Chamber has truly said: "It is only a few years ago that a man would have been called an impractical idealist to confess himself a be-

liever in a city plan. Today the most practical business men believe in it. The men of a few decades ago were called idealists if they discussed housing conditions from an economic standpoint. Today the majority of business men are recognizing that it is fundamental. So I could go on citing to you thousands of men in this city, and their prototypes found in every city, who in the last few years have come out of themselves and have broadened their sympathies and are interested in the weal of society in general." In other words, the social conscience has been awakened, so that business men by thousands are today trying to accomplish through Chambers of Commerce what Mr. Capen and his fellow workers were endeavoring to bring about through civic leagues and kindred organizations a decade or more ago. These Chambers are more than mere business organizations developed with the object of increasing the material production of cities; they are moral and social forces working for the uplift of the entire municipal life.

It was this broadened purpose which led Mr. Capen, during the last years of his life, to devote much of his time to the Boston Chamber of Commerce. He was a member of one of its most important committees, that on Municipal Affairs, and gave freely of his time and energy to guiding and creating legislation that related to Boston; and he devoted hours to matters of civic improvement. Probably one of the most important pieces of work he did for the Chamber was to act as

chairman of the committee which arranged for the important meeting of the International Chamber of Commerce, which met in Boston in 1912. This gathering of the leading business men of all nations was one of the most influential conventions that ever was held in Boston. Its resolutions were the most far-reaching that had ever come from any similar gathering, not only on purely financial matters, but also on the question of world peace.

In the last year of his life, Mr. Capen was greatly interested in the work of The North American Civic League for Immigrants. During the past generation we have received into this country sixteen million persons, or more than five times as many as lived in the original thirteen colonies when we secured our liberty from Great Britain. Most of these people have come to us not only ignorant of our language, but also untrained in our traditions and ideals. Many of them have suffered so keenly from oppression that they regard all government as evil and the representatives of all law as enemies. A majority of them, however, come with the best intentions, desiring to improve their own conditions and those of their families. But Mr. Capen saw that if they are to do this they must be welcomed by those who can guide them aright. In their ignorance they are often a prey to the vicious and the selfish, but, if met at the start with a kindly and brotherly spirit they will become loyal, self-respecting, helpful citizens. If, on the other hand,

they are neglected, they will become a menace and a source of peril.

The North American Civic League for Immigrants was organized with the purpose of informing the incoming multitude of the requirements of American citizenship and of protecting them from the designs of the unscrupulous. It proposed to do this by having the immigrants taught the English language and by forming schools where they could be instructed in the fundamentals of good citizenship, becoming acquainted with our history and learning the ideals of our national life. Pamphlets were printed in four languages and in one year one hundred thousand persons took advantage of the opportunities offered.

It was just the type of work to which Mr. Capen could gladly give his energy and wisdom. It seemed to him an opportunity to bring the Kingdom upon the earth. In writing on the subject he said: "What greater honor could come to any people than to continue to become the hope of the oppressed? The story of the great Republic is known in all the world. The people of the old world love this nation and that for which she stands. Those who come here are friendly, prejudiced in our favor. In our Civil War men born under another flag were loyal soldiers and gave their lives freely that the Republic might live. Such foreign-born men will continue to be loyal and true, if we meet them as we should with a hand of welcome, throw about them protection from wrong, educate them in our language, our

hopes and our purposes, and lead them to an intelligent citizenship. With our wide-open doors there is an awful peril, if we are careless and indifferent; if, however, we are true and faithful there is an opportunity for service to other nations such as has never before been accorded to any people. This new movement makes a universal appeal. Most organizations represent some one party, or creed, or sect, or section; this organization appeals to men of all parties and creeds and nationalities."

It was a movement that appealed to Mr. Capen from the side of economy. He believed that the ignorant laborer, especially if embittered against the law or against capital or society, is not as valuable a helper as the man who is an intelligent citizen.

The work appealed to him also from the side of patriotism. "Every man who loves America, and that for which she stands, must be an enthusiastic believer in this movement. To take these men who are coming to our shores in such large numbers and make them and their households over into self-respecting American citizens is a mighty work. The destiny of the nation for weal or woe depends largely upon our fidelity to this trust. We must either lift them up, or they will drag us down."

Again, the movement appealed to him from the side of humanity. He believed in it because it was trying to lift men higher and give them a better chance in life. "It is in harmony with the spirit

of our day. It has been pointed out that the eighteenth century stood for toleration, the nineteenth century for competition, the twentieth century for brotherhood. There is a great world conscience at work, and we no longer hear the old cry which sounded through the centuries, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' but a new message in positive form, 'I am my brother's keeper.' "

When the League was young and unknown it had to struggle for a hearing. Men were indifferent to its appeals and gave neither time nor money to its work. It was then that the Hon. D. Chauncey Brewer enlisted the active sympathy of Mr. Capen in the organization. He became one of its directors and devoted much time and energy to securing money for its work and to presenting its claim before The Boston Chamber of Commerce and before strong men in the churches.

## CHAPTER XIII

## THE JOURNEY ABROAD

For years it had been the purpose of Mr. Capen to see missionary work in actual operation, but, as he frequently stated, he did not wish to do this until after he had "learned the home end of it." In the spring of 1913, when it was being planned that a commission should attend the Centenary Celebration of the opening of the first American mission in Asia, it seemed to him, as it did to all, that the time had come for his visit. He and two others were chosen as the commission by the Prudential Committee of the American Board and great satisfaction at his appointment was expressed in many letters from the nearer and farther East. It was decided that the party should proceed through Turkey, Egypt, India, Ceylon, China, Korea, Japan, returning home by way of the Pacific. Details for the entire journey were so carefully worked out that the arrival of the party in Shanghai, China, nearly five months after the start from Boston, fell upon the date originally scheduled. This is a commentary upon Mr. Capen's habit of punctilious promptness.

He went also as the representative of The Massachusetts Peace Society and The World Peace Foundation. Mr. Ginn contributed a generous

check to make this possible and it was arranged that, especially in China and Japan, Mr. Capen should speak before representative bodies of business men.

On September 6, 1913, Mr. Capen, accompanied by Mrs. Capen, Miss Mary Capen and other friends, sailed from Boston. The trip was made by way of Italy, where he visited in Pompeii and Rome, studying the monuments of the decayed civilizations, of which he wrote at length to his Bible Class.

But he was more interested in studying the Italy of today. He wrote: "I am glad for this opportunity to see a little of the new Italy. The Italians are very proud of their nation, especially of the last fifty years of its history, since Garibaldi set them free. Seventy-five to eighty-five per cent of the men of Italy are lost to the old church. I am told there are three reasons for this. (1) The men are full of enthusiam for their nation and they feel that they cannot be patriots and Catholics. They have chosen, therefore, to be patriots. (2) The Catholic religion of Italy is reactionary and faces to the past. The leaders do not care to let in the light. New Italy on the other hand is progressive and is facing the future. (3) They hate the heads of the church because they are a political machine and they are weary of its intrigue. Northern Italy is much more progressive than Southern Italy; the people are better educated and more intelligent. In the south, the church has its strongest hold. The Mayor of

Rome is a Hebrew and he is outspoken against the papal authorities. What Italy needs, it seems to me, is a new Martin Luther with the gifts of leadership and the people are ready to follow him. They are a wonderful people with a great history. Some day, and not a very distant one, I believe, they will be redeemed from their ignorance and superstition and come into the larger liberty of the children of God. They have thrown away their old religion. It is to be Christianity or Atheism."

Owing to a plague of cholera in Turkey, the commission did not visit the mission stations in that country, but proceeded directly from Naples to Cairo, Egypt.

While in Cairo Mr. Capen saw the value of missions in an unusually striking and concrete way. "In the afternoon, with our guide, we drove through the streets with their old shops, then through the Mussulman quarters and the oldest streets in Cairo, miles of dirt, wretchedness, squalor and ignorant humanity. There is no race suicide here and what wretched people! It seems a blessing to learn that the conditions are so unsanitary that seventy-five per cent of the children die before they are two years old. If anyone does not believe in missions I would like to have him go through that wretched Mussulman quarter, and then in contrast go and look at the faces of the boys and girls at the American Mission, and see how Christian education is redeeming noble men and women."

The primary purpose of the commission, as we

have stated, was to attend the Centenary of America's Christian connection with Asia, observed in the Marathi Mission in Bombay, India. The account of the arrival of the commission at that city and some of their observations were recorded by Mr. Capen: "We arrived early in the morning of October thirty-first, and saw the glorious sun rise over the harbor and the city. The steamer did not come up to the wharf, but we were landed in a tug. On the wharf to meet us was Dr. Robert A. Hume and his son Ernest, who has become so famous in his knowledge of Indian literature, the pastor and officers of the church, and I don't know how many of the members. We were immediately garlanded; it is the Indian way of honoring guests. It is a beautiful custom. You have a long garland of flowers put over your neck and are at the same time given a small bouquet of flowers. We were then driven in carriages to the church compound. Here the church was gathered and the children from their mission schools, hundreds in all, and we had a great reception. We were all garlanded and then several photographs taken. We then went to breakfast about ten o'clock. Friday afternoon we rode to the Towers of Silence, the Parsee burial place. We had the permission to enter through the favor of one of their leaders. At death, the vultures come and devour the bodies, and then the bones are buried. We drove also through the Hindu quarter of the city in the early evening. It was the closing day of the Feast of Lamps and the houses and stores

were all lighted. Merchants open a new set of books at this time and every man worships his own business, whatever it is. The new ledgers are brought to a Brahmin priest and worshipped through him. In the evening we had a reception in the church in honor of the Commission and were garlanded again. We all had to respond.

"On Saturday, November first, we went to Miss Millard's Industrial School for Blind Boys. Then we visited the home of a very wealthy merchant, a great leader here among the reformed class of Hindus. He is a manufacturer of cotton cloth. It was a great opportunity to see the inside of his beautiful home. In the afternoon we saw just the opposite of all this. We went to an old Hindu Temple where a rich Hindu woman has spent her fortune in a resort for Hindu holy men, so-called, and Hindus on a pilgrimage. The entrance to it, through which we passed, was vile, and the sight of wretched humanity was awful. They sat on the floor in this wretchedness, long haired, dirty, an unspeakable sight. We saw Hindu philanthropy at its best and it was wretched enough. In the afternoon at 5.30 we had a meeting of the Christian Association, more speeches and more garlands. That evening, with Dr. Strong, I went to Sholapur, one of our mission stations, and spent our first Sunday in India. At 9.30 we had a meeting with all the Sunday schools. They were lined up and we walked into the church between them. Part of the way we walked over some red cloth which I found afterwards were some red turbans

unwound. The owners were told that they ought to feel greatly honored because we had walked over them. The children's exercises were splendid, although in Marathi language. Indian boys are great on dialogues. We were garlanded again and also had bracelets of flowers put around our wrists. We saw one very sad sight. Several of the Hindu girls were betrothed to be married, although only about eight or ten years old. They had the mark on their foreheads and a necklace which answers to our wedding ring.

"Sunday afternoon there was a united meeting of the church and several Christian Endeavor Societies. We were garlanded four or five times more by the different Societies. At 6.30 I spoke at the Ripon Club, a social club of English speaking Hindus, Mohammedans and Parsees. They have a fine club house. My theme was on 'International Brotherhood.' On Monday we visited the mission schools. We then went to the leper asylum, more speeches and more garlands. They then drove me out to see a low class people who make their living by pilfering. They were raw heathens with no schools and miserable straw huts, not high enough to even sit up straight in. In the afternoon, the native helpers from the out stations came to the bungalow. There were about sixty-five of them and about ten white missionaries and teachers. They told of their work and we were garlanded again. Three girls of the graduating class were there and had dialogues, as beautiful Christian girls as you ever saw, with the

light of heaven upon their faces. The girls' dormitory was illuminated for us with tiny lamps consisting of a little earthen vessel with some oil and a wick exactly like what they used in Bible times. If anyone doubts what Christ is doing, let him see what I have seen in the last two days. The first missionary came here fifty years ago and it was spiritual darkness. Today there is a church of six hundred and fifty members, Sunday schools and Christian Endeavor Societies, schools for boys and girls, out-stations with Christian workers and the community is being transformed. There have been in this station about five thousand Christians in the fifty years. No one has any idea of the wretchedness of the homes of the low caste, or outcast proper; they are made of mud and straw and cost about three rupees, or one of our American dollars. These are the better class; the poorer ones do not look as if they cost thirty cents."

The feelings of Mr. Capen and his fellow travelers as they stood in the presence of the great Christian congregation of India at the celebration of one hundred years of missions, taking to those people the greetings of President Woodrow Wilson, of the governor of Massachusetts and of the American Board cannot adequately be described.

In his address Mr. Capen reviewed some of the more important changes of the century, calling attention to the fact that one hundred years before there had been no steamships nor railroads, no

telegraphs, telephones, nor airships. Little had been known in the United States either of the Near East or of the Far East; it was a strange country to which Gordon Hall and Samuel Nott had sailed, and six or seven months had elapsed before the home office knew of their safe arrival. The United States had been flooded with French Atheism, and Tom Paine clubs had been very common. Yale and Princeton had been centers of infidelity, the former having only two Christian students and the latter not even one. Sunday schools and similar organizations had not been dreamed of. There had been no organized Christianity outside of the local churches. When the American Board petitioned the Massachusetts Legislature for a charter, it had been at first refused, with the statement that Massachusetts had no religion that it could afford to export.

One hundred years before, he continued, there had been little missionary interest anywhere in the world. When the first missionaries had tried to enter India, they had been refused admission, the authorities asserting that they "would rather have a ship-load of devils than a ship-load of missionaries." The first Sunday school in Massachusetts had not been established until 1810; in 1913 there were in the United States alone 13,732,841 schools, and missions were being given a place in their courses of study. The first Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor had been organized in 1881, only thirty-two years before, but there were then in the United States 44,864 socie-

ties, with about 2,000,000 workers, and missions were everywhere a part of the warp and woof of Christian Endeavor work. The Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions had had its birth at Mt. Hermon in 1886, and it had reached by its propaganda nearly one thousand institutions of higher learning in the United States. In the twenty-seven years of its existence 5,500 of those enrolled by it had been sent out to foreign lands by the mission boards. Growing out of The Young Men's and The Young Women's Christian Associations and The Student Volunteer Movement, The World's Student Federation, which then comprised 2,305 associations and 156,071 members, had become a parliament of the world. In 1906 the Laymen's Missionary Movement had been started. No organization had ever reached mature men as this had.

But great as had been the development of the thought and the activity of the Church and other religious organizations there has been an even greater change in the thought of the world. "The diplomacy of the world is on the side of missions," declared Mr. Capen. "Our great leaders in the United States, President Wilson, Ex-President Taft, Secretary of State Bryan, and many others, are enthusiastic believers in the mission enterprises. The press of America is almost universally in favor of missions. Within the last few years there is hardly a paper of any prominence in this country which has not had some sympathetic editorial notice of missions."

While Mr. Capen dwelt at length on the new forces which had enlarged the religious life of America in one hundred years, he recognized that greater changes had taken place as a result of the reflex influence of missions upon this country. He pointed out how missions had saved the United States from narrowness and provincialism, how it had appealed to the heroism of the student class, furnishing a moral equivalent for war, how the work had brought together the various denominations of America, not only reducing ecclesiastical divisions, but also preventing a wicked waste of money, men and energy, and how it had become one of the greatest forces in uniting the whole world and hastening the day of universal peace and good will.

Mr. Capen was an optimist, but his opinion was based upon facts of history. When he contemplated them, his great soul looked forward with confidence into the future. "We are on the threshold of a great movement that is to Christianize the nations. To accomplish this we should federate our work at home, and federate all our missionary work abroad. This passion for redeeming humanity has been one of the greatest phenomena of this century, and it is based on love for a personal Christ. With courage, faith, and indomitable patience, our missionaries have sought to Christianize the older nations of the world. 'What an absurdity is this effort,' so the world says. It has learned better now. Yet, it is the same absurdity as when a little band of fisher-

men, inspired by their risen Lord, sought to Christianize the Roman Empire. Who triumphed then? Who will triumph now? God, God, who is back of all."

Wherever Mr. Capen went in India he was impressed by the degrading social conditions—the enslaved womanhood, the loveless lot of wives, the hopeless state of young widows, the deadening effect of the caste system and the wide-spread impurity. He realized the regrettable lack of wise philanthropy and appreciated the inability of the native religions to reform or redeem.

Concerning his visit to Benares, the sacred city of India, he wrote: "We started at seven o'clock in the morning, piloted by Rev. Mr. Longman of the London Missionary Society, to go to the Ganges and see its Hindu Temples. We took a large flat-bottom craft, rowed by two men with long sweeping oars, and we went back and forth and saw the crowds taking their morning worship by bathing in the sacred Ganges. The banks were lined with temples, the bells were ringing to wake up the gods, people were bringing their gifts of flowers and fruits to give to the gods, which the priests got. The holy men were in evidence. Some of them were saying over and over again, 'Ram, Ram,' the name of their god; others had their hands over their faces and were swinging around; one was holding his nose, as certain prayers are to be said holding your breath. There was an ascetic in a stone cavity going through his prayers. There is a regular formula, and to do

the whole thing takes three or four hours. There are about three miles of these temples, and thousands of priests who live on the credulity of the poor people by taking their gifts. The pilgrims come from everywhere. At times of festivals, sometimes a million people are here and what must it be then! Bullocks are brought as offerings and two of them were having a fight on the steps of one of the temples, the worshippers urging them. Strange sights indeed they were! We then left our boat and walked a while in the narrow gulleys and lanes among these temples. It was the saddest sight I ever saw. Horrible idols, impure and corrupt, lined the way. I would not write about them; it makes me recoil to think about them. I saw a spiked bed and a holy man sat on it for the gift of a few annas. He was a downright fraud. There is the Inner Pool, which we passed in our walk, considered the most sacred spot in India. We went by the Golden Temple and the Cow Temple. In the latter, you can often see poor deluded people kissing the cow's tail. There was a constant procession of people passing into these temples with their offerings of jars of water from the sacred Ganges, and other things. The bells were clanging and the narrow lane was lined with a solid row of beggars holding out their hands and beseeching us to give. The whole thing was awful and depressingly sad. I have seen it once; I never want to see it again. The holy men, so-called, are the biggest frauds! They are practically naked. We photographed one and gave

him an anna, which is two cents. We were followed for a mile or two by another one, who said we gave the other man an anna and he wanted one, too. He was also after other visitors. The whole system is awfully degrading; it is a religion of lust. One of the temples has a sign over it, 'No Women Admitted'; the images are awfully vile, I am told. Some of the temples have rooms upstairs kept for vile purposes, and all in the name of religion! One of the sacred books declares that if a Brahmin teaches an outcast, both will go to one of the lowest hells. That is all the message that Hinduism can give to fifty million human beings with immortal souls, who are born outside of caste. Compare this with the message of Jesus Christ to every human being, a message of love and forgiveness. Yet we have swamis come to America and tell about the beauties of Hinduism. If I ever run across one of those fellows when I get home, he will have an uncomfortable time."

In view of these conditions, and considering also his own passion to bring the Kingdom of God on the earth, we do not find it unnatural that in his addresses at the Centenary of the Marathi Mission he laid the chief emphasis upon the social message of Christianity. He dwelt at length upon what Christianity has done for woman and upon her place in the world, showing that where Christianity has not entered woman has everywhere been degraded, and has been used as a slave and a drudge. Once, he stated, it was thought impossi-

ble for woman to be taught; people considered that it would be easier, for example, to teach a cow to read.

"Where Christianity has entered," he continued, "there is a growing recognition that woman is the equal of man. She should have the same legal rights. Where Christianity has entered, universal respect is paid to her. The first institution God made was the home, and woman, as the mother of the children, has been the center of it. Christianity has made her the queen. No wonder women love Christ, for it is his teaching which has lifted them to their present broad position of influence."

He dwelt also upon the fact that it is Christianity that has emphasized the sacredness of marriage. "Where the principles of Christ have never entered, the marriage tie has been lightly held; plural wives, wives of inferior rank, wives kept and used as slaves, have been the rule. We know the wretchedness and degradation of it all. Compare this with Christian marriage, one woman with one man, as equals, as partners together, for joy or for sorrow, for better, for worse, to the end of life."

He emphasized the fact that it was Christ who first laid supreme stress not only upon the outer conduct but also upon the inner thought—who taught the world that the sin of lust is in the thought and that this comes before the outward act. "We know the awful immoralities permitted in non-Christian lands, not only permitted but

often committed in the name of religion. No man can be a Christian, however, who does not strive for a clean heart and a pure life."

In the midst of a nation of poverty, where there was no systematic charity and no effort on the part of the higher caste to elevate the lower, Mr. Capen made it clear to his hearers that Christianity creates respect for the weak and the poor—that the heart of Christ's religion is in the love and care which it inspires its followers to show to the sick and the dependent. Finally, in a land honeycombed by the caste system, he led them to think of Christianity as the origin of civil and religious liberty, of the Sermon on the Mount as laying the foundation of democracy and of the letters of Paul as showing that in the Kingdom of God there can be no recognition of distinctions between master and slave, but that all stand as Christ's free men. He prophesied that some day oppression of every kind will cease and that the truth of Christ's message that greatness is not in wealth and power and position but in service to others will be everywhere realized.

Even when he spoke to these Christians of India upon a distinctly religious subject, "The Cross of Christ," it was the social aspect that was uppermost. The cross, he declared, is a challenge to every man to the noblest service, a call away from a life of ease to a life of unselfish devotion. "The way of complete and final victory is only by the way of the cross. The things most worthy are achieved by sacrifices. We must make Jesus

Christ Master and Lord in all our lives. We must yield a sacrificial obedience to His will. We must consider our lives a trust from Him. Not until we are willing to work and give so that it will be real sacrifices that cost something, shall we be able to perform the task that is permitted to us. It was not an easy thing for Christ to redeem the world, nor has the work thus far accomplished been carried on in an easy way. All the gains thus far have been through sacrifices in the way of the cross. Let us join the number of those who are willing to give themselves, their time, their means, their pleasure, that Christ may be quickly known in all the earth."

He was much impressed by the work of those far-sighted missionaries who had established schools and laid their foundations by developing a generation of intelligent Christians rather than by devoting all their time to preaching and direct evangelistic work. Thousands of dollars have been wasted by some denominations in work of this latter type. Their missionaries have gone forth with enthusiasm and have often enrolled large numbers of so-called "converts," but they have failed to build up Christian communities or to effect permanently the social life. On the other hand, missionaries like Hume and Fairbank and their families have established schools, and have not only made converts, but have changed the life of entire cities, forming intelligent Christian communities and creating leaders for the new India.

Mr. Capen wrote concerning his visit to Ah-

mednagar: "Dr. Hume is the leading missionary here, although he has a fine group of splendid men and women about him. There are about fifteen hundred pupils of all grades in the schools and nearly all are Christians. The population is twenty-five thousand, and six thousand of these are Christians, or one in six. It is one in four in the United States, so you can see what great work has been done here since 1831, when this station was opened."

He went also to Vadala, where the Fairbank family has worked over sixty years. When this consecrated group of missionaries went to this place it was in the darkness of heathenism. No work had been done for the uplift of the people, life was in danger from outlaws, and schools were unknown. Through the efforts of the Fairbanks, schools for boys and girls have trained a generation of men and women who have developed a community where life is safe, property is protected and justice is administered, and where hundreds enjoy the privileges of the Christian faith.

While Mr. Capen was visiting the Vadala station he had an experience which he counted one of the greatest events of his life. "It was just after sundown when four men appeared with a Christian spokesman. They were 'Mahars,' outcasts. They had walked twenty-two miles to plead that they might have Christian teachers and preachers, and a school for their children. They had made this plea many times before and had been refused, for there was no money to pay for the man. They

said there were one thousand people in the village, there were one hundred men who wanted to be baptized and become Christians, there were fifty boys for the school. What a plea! They were willing themselves to put up the schoolhouse and the teacher's house at a cost of $50. Mud walls and straw roofs are cheap! Rev. Mr. Fairbank, the head of the station, to whose bungalow they had come, told me he had a trained man all ready when the salary could be provided. He wanted it for five years before starting the school; it would be folly to begin and stop. The last state would be worse than the first. I asked what salary was needed to support the trained leader and was told $50, the regular price for such men. I felt as though I must accept this trust. To send these men back into darkness, when I could help, would be a wrong; so I said I would stand back of the man's salary for five years. I rejoiced to have the chance. Such happy men as they were when they started back! You wonder perhaps at the price. One of the arguments I have used for foreign missions was the increased power of money; a small sum in our money will do so much here. A man who makes cheap shoes earns six cents a day; some of the laborers earn only five cents a day. A fifty-dollar salary, therefore, for an educated man out of our Christian schools is a low wage in comparison."

Mr. Capen was deeply impressed by the sacrifices made by the native Christians. While he was in Ahmednagar there was a service of offer-

ings. "The men from the different stations marched in with their banners. They sung and made more noise before the meeting opened than a college crowd or political rally. They went around and around in a circle, singing 'Victory for Christ.' Then their offering came. Men brought their money and laid it upon the communion table, as the colored people used to do in the South, but they did not all bring money. One brought a dozen bananas, another needlework, eight or ten chickens, three eggs, and a basket of sweets. These were sold at auction on the church steps after the service. Sometimes they bring a goat. This is very natural for the people back in the country who know nothing about money; some of them never saw any. They bring in eggs or chickens or goats to the pastor and barter them for clothing or whatever they want. They bring for the Lord's offering, what they have."

To become Christians sometimes costs these people their family connections. From Madras Mr. Capen wrote: "In the early evening we went to a meeting at the Baptist Compound. At the Baptist church in the morning they had a very prominent man from the Telegus unite with the church. The leaders of his caste met and voted him out of the family. Around the church there were hired mourners at the time of the service, making a great noise, mourning for him as one dead. It costs something to be a Christian in India."

Not all the sacrifices, however, are on the part of

the natives. In Ahmednagar is a great industrial work carried on by a graduate of the Institute of Technology. He has invented a loom for the poor people which received a gold medal from the Government Exhibition. "His wife died a year or two ago, but he stays at his post with his two small boys. He has the regular salary of an American Board Missionary; I think $40 a month, or $480 a year. He has a standing offer from the Indian government of $6,000 a year and another from an automobile firm in Great Britain of $10,000 a year. The spirit of self-sacrifice has not yet gone out of the world."

One of the finest services rendered by Mr. Capen on his journey through the mission fields was in the friendly encouragement that he took to the missionaries and the hope that he inspired in them. Indeed, at home or abroad, he was interested chiefly in people and in what they were doing. He knew the power of sympathy and the value of the sense of companionship in service, and hundreds of men and women all over the world have risen to bear testimony to what his Christlike character has done for them. Loyal L. Wirt, who was one of the pioneer missionaries of the Sunday School and Publishing Society in Northern California, wrote:

"After five years of pioneer Sunday school work, a settled pastorate with opportunities for study and travel was making its strong appeal. But it took all my courage to tell the good Secretary I had made up my mind to resign. It was

then that I learned one of the secrets of the Society's wise administration and vigorous policy. 'Let us go down and see President Capen about it,' said Dr. Boynton. Every man has his sacred hours. They are not many. Usually he can count them upon his fingers. The hour I spent in the private office of Torrey, Bright and Capen I have always counted on my index finger. It was a revelation to me of a business man's valuation of the Kingdom of God. Of ministerial valuations I had heard many, and they were pretty much alike—but here was a new set of values, a new terminology, an ardor, a sweetness, a loyalty, a comprehensive sweep of the triumphs and opportunities of the Church Militant that somehow put me in the class with the soldier who, having touched Wellington's hand, was ready to count the most difficult or dangerous mission a privilege. Here was one of the unpublished springs of vitality. I was beginning to touch the sources of the power and passion felt in thirty states through the channels of this young Society. The particular object of our visit to that business office was almost forgotten as President Capen sketched the glorious fields of service committed to this 'John the Baptist' Society and to the men who were laying the foundations of a City whose builder and maker is God. Little country schoolhouses became Bethels; the packs of Sunday-school supplies were no longer heavy, but had become leaves of healing to the wounded in life's by-ways. Somehow as Greatheart spoke in those low, vibrant

tones, the work of a Sunday-school missionary became the most sacred thing on earth. To break the Bread of Life to groups of isolated men, women and children, who would not hear the evangel again until his next visit many months hence, made a cathedral pulpit seem commonplace. He stretched both hands across his office desk, palms upward, and seemed to weigh the comparative importance of each. What a man he ever was for bringing out the true values of life. But not satisfied with his own judgment, he quietly turned the key in the door and said, 'But wisdom cometh from above; shall we talk to the Father about it?' My eyes grow dim as I think of that hour, nineteen years ago. I cannot walk down Washington Street today without wanting to take the shoes from off my feet as I pass No. 350, for to me it will always be holy ground. When we arose from our knees he came over to my chair, slipped his arm about my shoulders and said, 'The Society needs you, the people in the mountains need you, I think Christ needs you out there where the lambs stray.' As I took his hand, the greatest pulpit in the land had no attraction for me. I was hearing the call, not of the ninety and nine, but of the *one*.

" 'And you will go back?'

" 'Yes, I will go back, if you let me, with a new sense of the dignity and the privilege of this wider ministry, and will stay there so long as you and Dr. Boynton hold the ropes.' As we went out into the busy street, I overheard him say

to the Secretary, 'I think the funds of the Society will admit of an increase in the appropriation for California, will they not?' He waved a cheery good-bye and was gone. I never saw his kindly face again. Five minutes before my mother's spirit slipped through the 'wicket gate,' I heard her whisper, 'Soon I shall see my great and good Dr. Finney again.' Some day I hope to see my great and good Dr. Capen again."

This element of his character was a part of his very life—not an adjunct to his office, not a thing worn professionally. He was not one man officially and another man in his private capacity. Sympathy was a part of his being, because love for his Christ was the breath of his life. It was expressed at all times and to all classes of people.

It was his habit to salute policemen, as he met them at their posts of duty. A friend, who often came from the South Station with Mr. Capen, noticed that he never failed to greet the officer on duty in the crowded street in front of the entrance. After Mr. Capen's death this friend, out of curiosity, stopped one day to ask the officer if he remembered Mr. Capen and had heard of his death. Immediately the man took a postal card from his pocket, saying:

"I received this card from him only a few days ago. It was written from India." He wrote hundreds of such messages to people all over the world, some in humble places and others in positions of influence.

Rev. Charles S. Mills, well known to the Congre-

gationalists of America, and a child of the Central Church of Jamaica Plain, wrote to Dr. Edward W. Capen:

"Your father and mother gave me the privilege of their affection for the sake of the old days. When a boy I used to see them and felt the strength of their influence in Jamaica Plain. Through all the years your father's love and friendship has been most precious to me. I remember the impression he made upon me when I first saw him in his young manhood, eagerly giving his life to the service of the Church and to the Master. I can see him as he rose in the prayer meeting to speak and can feel still the fervor of his Christian appeal. I have no question that this personal sense of divinity touched my own life in those early days, and when I came to know him familiarly after entering the ministry, I always felt that he was like an elder brother, almost a spiritual father. I do not think I ever passed through any particularly significant event in my ministry, which became known to him, that I did not receive from his own hand, a warm, hearty, personal letter, and I never met him anywhere without having the sense of his personal affection. It is a great quality of a noble life to share itself with those younger in service; that, your father's life illustrated to an extraordinary degree."

Mr. Capen was an optimist by faith. If there was work which needed to be done, he believed some way would be found to accomplish it. If there was no immediate solution of the difficulty, he encour-

aged men to hope that a way would be opened. He took his optimism to the mission stations, spent hours in conferences with the workers, heard sympathetically the story of their needs, and sent them back to their posts of duty with the feeling that they had a personal friend in the President of the Board—a man who was helping to bear their burdens, carry their sorrows and share their disappointments. They were made to feel that the Board was more than a machine; that it was a personality full of love and hope and that failure was impossible.

When Mr. Capen was in his native land much of the value of his service came from the fact that he was a layman giving unselfishly of his time for the advancement of the Kingdom of God. Mr. George S. Goddard, State Librarian of Connecticut, writing of the time when he was a young man in preparatory school, says:

"It was through Mr. Capen that I received my first outlook toward the missionary field. I remember his intense earnestness when speaking and the clear manner in which he presented his subject. I can never forget the impression made when I learned that Mr. Capen was not a minister, but that it was a Boston business man who was speaking to us boys and girls instead of a minister or returned missionary. The influence and impressions made by his visit have been emphasized by the several addresses which it has been my privilege to hear him make during these later years, and I am inclined to believe that the im-

pressions made upon me were not much different than those made upon my schoolmates and the other young men and young women, to whom it has been his privilege these many years to present his favorite theme."

Mr. George W. Coleman bears a similar testimony: "May I tell you that I took Mr. Capen for my ideal Christian business man nearly twenty years ago? It has been my ambition ever since to do as he did rather than to devote all my energies to accumulating a fortune, or to winning fame and power. I suppose there are thousands of other young men who have looked up to Mr. Capen in this same way."

Professor Williston Walker of The Yale School of Religion writes: "It was my privilege to be associated with him in a good many matters, notably and lately in the Commission of Nineteen. The longer I knew him the more my admiration for him increased. He was in a peculiar degree a man of sanity of judgment, of clearness of vision and of integrity of purpose. He was a man to be trusted and admired. But even more, he was a man of Christian character that was in no way superficial, but was of the fundamental core of his being. I saw him in some, to him, trying situations, and he bore himself ever with simplicity and strength and even more, in eminent sweetness of Christian spirit. He has done a noble work."

When Mr. Capen visited the Orient the power of his influence as a layman was even greater

than it had been in his own country. In the Far East religion has been associated with the priesthood, and the laymen from the West whom they had seen had come largely in search of wealth. Here came a man without pay, serving because he loved mankind and was eager to lift them to a higher plane. He came with only one purpose and that was to give,—"not to be ministered unto but to minister,"—and through his example scores of men got a new vision of the meaning of Christianity.

When he left India and went to Ceylon he was further impressed by the value of Christian education as the foundation of missionary work. He wrote:

"The great number, 118, of village schools, with 9,000 pupils, with the great school for girls at Uduvil, made famous by the long service of Miss Agnew, and now of Miss Howland, with Jaffna College for the boys, have been providing preachers and teachers among the vigorous families of Ceylon. There are now nearly 2,000 students in our high schools and colleges.

"Our last Sunday was spent in connection with the work of this mission. The center of our operations was from the bungalow of Rev. Giles G. Brown at Vaddukoddai. I started with Mr. Brown for the church service at Uduvil, several miles away, passing one village school and the ruins of another by the way. The church at Uduvil was filled with a large audience when we arrived, and I had the privilege of speaking to them

through an interpreter. At least 300 girls from the Uduvil school were in attendance. There was a communion service, and several united with the church.

"On our way home we called at the house of an old Indian preacher who has been a noted leader, an old saint dying of creeping paralysis, and almost ready to be translated. He could hardly move a limb; his speech was impaired; but his mind was perfectly clear. He spends much of his time in prayer in a systematic way. He has a topic for every day of the week, and he is praying for the whole world. I have a copy of his plan, which impresses one with its breadth and comprehensiveness. The name of this old saint was chosen by him when he was baptized, and is Paul Lowe Christian. He wanted it to be apparent to every one that he was a Christian. His middle name, Lowe, was chosen by him in recognition of the man who had been most instrumental in leading him to Christ. This remarkable man has had a wonderful experience. He comes of a Buddhist family, and was expected to have been a priest in the Buddhist temple. His family now own one of these heathen temples, and his grandfather's shoes are worshiped there. When a lad he went to one of our schools, was led to see the folly of his old belief, and became a Christian. He was persecuted for a time, and did not dare to go home. As a result of his giving up his old religion he lost all his property. He has a fine mind; has enjoyed reading such books as those of

President Henry C. King and Professor W. N. Clarke. He knows what he believes, and when in health could hold his own in any religious discussion. We could see in this man what we have seen everywhere, that many of the high caste as well as those of the low caste and the outcast, are leavening the nation with Christian truth.

"At four o'clock we spoke in the church opposite the compound of Mr. Brown's bungalow. The building is an old one, erected by the Dutch in 1678, and bears that date on the door. It was a pleasure to speak from the pulpit where Rev. Mr. Sanders, the father of Dr. Frank K. Sanders, preached for so many years in his faithful service to these people.

"After the service we had an informal gathering never to be forgotten. About twenty pastors and teachers, including three from Jaffna College, came to the bungalow, and were there for two hours. They were all Tamils, and had been trained in our schools here, and were vigorous and capable men. They told me of their work, and the difficulty they have in living on their meager salaries. The increased cost of living seems to be a world problem. The price of rice, the staple of their food here, has doubled in the past few years. Formerly it was a cent a pound; now it is two cents. Eggs were four cents a dozen; now they are twelve. The salaries of the native pastors and teachers in the village vary from ten to twenty rupees a month, or from $40 to $80 a year. And yet every one of these teachers, out of their small

incomes, with families to support, give one-tenth to support the church! They put many of us to shame by their self-sacrifice and their love of the church which means so much to them.

"Jaffna College buildings are in this compound. These will always be memorable, among other things, for the fact that the first Y. M. C. A. in Asia was established here, April 26, 1884, when Frank K. Sanders was a teacher. This event is commemorated by a tablet.

"We left India and Ceylon with the glad thought that the work of our mission boards is changing the nation; that the results are wider and deeper than we had been expecting; that our missionaries on their own ground are a wonderful group of men and women, worthy of their great predecessors who laid the foundations of Christian institutions a generation or two ago. The burden, however, is greater than they can bear. Let our churches strengthen them quickly. There never was such an opportunity before; there never will be such an opportunity again. The battle is on now. It is no time for men to be skulking in the rear. Let us put up the money and the men to match the opportunity."

It must not be forgotten that Mr. Capen went on his mission not only to study the mission fields but also to deliver a message on peace. He was much impressed by the eagerness with which men listened to this message, but more by the enthusiasm with which he was sought by various organizations as a speaker on this question.

"A man is respected here in the East," he wrote, "because he is an American. We have found this to be true everywhere and it is a source of a proper patriotic pride. Our country from its situation has been free from the entangling alliances and difficulties of European nations; what we do and say is not open to suspicion. The diplomacy of our nation for the most part has been in harmony with the 'golden rule,' we have 'played fair' with others: cordial expressions of good will have been received everywhere.

"It has been a surprise to us to find an eagerness to listen to the discussion of at least one great international question. When we left home as one of a commission not only to represent the American Board at the centenary exercises at Bombay, but also to represent the World Peace Foundation, we supposed there would be little opportunity to interest the people of India on this latter subject. We knew China and Japan were greatly interested and were not surprised, therefore, to receive letters asking us to speak on world peace in these nations. But we did not realize the interest there seems to be in this subject in India. We have found letters and telegrams awaiting us from place to place, asking us to speak upon this question. These audiences have been composed of Hindus, Mohammedans, Parsee students, as well as Christian leaders. In one place the presiding officer was a leader in a wealthy social club, and the meeting was held in the clubhouse; in another he was the principal of the largest Hindu

college, with 1,200 students, and was one of the two leading Indians in a great city. In another case the leader was a prominent Hindu lawyer, in another a judge of the courts. The theme chosen was "International Brotherhood," and the response of the audience and the sympathetic words of those presiding indicated their deep interest. They were glad to have a business man from the United States discuss the question with them. In every case the audiences were educated men, so that we could speak to them in English, and not through an interpreter, as was necessary with other audiences of a different class.

"This idea of brotherhood, and that nations should find a way to live as brothers, found a responsive chord. The thought that nations should give up their suspicions and jealousies and reduce their army and naval expenses seemed to be everywhere heartily approved.

"It is not difficult to see why the people of India have such respect for the people of the United States, and why they are willing, therefore, to listen courteously to one of her citizens. For a hundred years our nation has been sending to India great missionaries, educators and physicians. The American Board alone has invested in the work $10,000,000 for churches, schools, colleges, hospitals, dispensaries and industrial plants. And the American Board, while the oldest organization, is but one; there are 40 other American and Canadian societies. In 100 years probably 40,000 men and women have left our

shores on their errand to uplift and bless a great nation. In times of famine and distress we have poured out our money generously and saved tens of thousands from starvation. All this mighty work has been done freely and heartily without the slightest hope of selfish gain. India is on the other side of the world from us; we are not connected with her in any way politically, and our commercial dealings are very small. The unselfishness of this work has won the hearts of many of the thoughtful men of India. It was a pleasant experience at different places in public receptions to have the head of the municipality, and in every case a Hindu, pay his tribute of praise for what we are doing for them; the words were apparently sincere and spoken without reserve. It has been a great satisfaction for me to say that the thing in which we at home take pride is not our rapid growth as a nation nor our size nor our wealth; it is not our manufactures, nor our great agricultural and mineral wealth. Material prosperity makes neither a man nor a nation great. The thing of which we are most proud is what our nation has done for civil and religious liberty; that to many of our nation there is a word larger than 'nationalism,' and that is 'internationalism,' and that we desire to exemplify real 'brotherhood' to every nation.

"The United States holds a proud position for what she has done, but with it there is an ever-increasing opportunity and responsibility; in fact, 'responsibility' is another way of spelling 'oppor-

tunity.' It ought to sober every American and give him a new purpose to help keep our nation true to the highest ideals, not for her own sake alone, but to uplift the world."

## CHAPER XIV

## THE FUNDAMENTAL MOTIVE

By this time the impression must have been made upon the reader that few men of any generation have undertaken such a variety of duties and have performed all of them so well as did Mr. Capen. This success is especially remarkable in view of the fact that he had no specialized training to fit him for the accomplishment of any of his greatest achievements.

He had no special education, for example, to equip him for his work on the School Committee, where he was surrounded by some of the best educators of the day, yet a man who was in a position to know declared that "Boston never had any three men in her history who ever did so much so well in three years as he had done." When he went to the Congregational House as President of the Sunday School and Publishing Society he was only a young business man, inexperienced in the arts of public speech, and as yet but little known to his denomination. Here he was associated with a company of men who had the best that colleges and theological schools could offer. Yet he did for the Society what others had failed to do and in a very few years became one of the most conspicuous figures in the Congregational churches. Many of his predecessors as Presidents

of the American Board had been men of the most conspicuous ability, men who had dignified the position by their scholarship and adorned it by their eloquence. Only two years had intervened between his presidency and that of the king of extemporaneous preachers, Dr. Richard Storrs, and he followed immediately that polished and gifted preacher and rare spirit, Dr. Charles M. Lamson. No one ever thought of Mr. Capen as either a scholar or an orator, as compared with these predecessors. He possessed neither their academic polish, their breadth of learning, nor their knowledge of the fundamental theological and philosophical tendencies of his day. Yet no man in that high position has ever been more respected by the constituency of the American Board than he, and probably none ever accomplished so much for the Board as did this layman who rose from the ranks with only a high school education.

One is compelled to ask what was the secret of his power. Yet the more intimately one knew Mr. Capen the more keenly did he realize the difficulty of answering this question. It is easy for men to name certain conspicuous traits which were evident to those who served with him on committees. There were characteristics which made him one of the most ideal committeemen that ever sat about a table. But it may be doubted whether the real secret of his influence was to be found in these qualities. Deeper in his personality there lay something which affected men, something as

difficult to define as the subtle influence that touches the earth in spring and makes the flowers open and the birds sing—a spiritual element that vanishes when one tries to imprison it with the pen, and that will scarcely speak through the rough medium of words.

This mystic quality in his character is touched by Mrs. Frank Mason North, one of the trustees of Wellesley College: "Now and then against the background of our common humanity one life shines forth with such radiance that by its light we discover anew what God meant us all to be. Such a life manifests a genius for spirituality. The purity and simplicity of its consecration, its aloofness from tangling alliances, the swiftness of its response to the Divine Spirit and to human need becomes to us a revelation of the power of God in the human soul. Through it God is able to speak to us of his ideals for his children in the terms of a human character."

This is probably as clear an expression as can be given of the ennobling influence which seemed to radiate from Mr. Capen's life, exerting a strange power over those who knew him. It had its basis in his strong religious faith. He believed that conscious fellowship with God is the foundation of every strong life. He held this not only as an article of his intellectual belief but as a part of his most vital experience. In very truth he lived with God—in the constant consciousness of the Divine Presence—and in the absolute faith that he could accomplish nothing without divine

aid. It was a faith that gave to all who met him a sense of the dignity of life, that made men feel that they could do things they had never dreamed of, and gave them a conviction that anything less than the highest was unworthy of them.

One of the most certain facts about Mr. Capen's career is that he never sought any position. He was never an office-seeker nor was he looking for honors. Yet he was the most outstanding figure in any gathering he attended. Men felt that he had something they needed, that he lived a life which in some way gave dignity and power to any position that he filled. The movement of which he was a part turned to him naturally as its leader, for there was no other who could lend it such grace as he. "He glorified whatever he touched," said one man who knew him well. This phrase almost perfectly expresses the secret of his leadership and states the reason why he was eagerly sought by many a cause that wanted to make its appeal to a New England audience or to the wider interests of the Church.

This religious element of his life was as much the secret of his power in things commonly called secular as in his distinctively church activities. Those who knew him as a member of the School Committee, as the leader of the Municipal League and as a vital force in the Chamber of Commerce speak of his grace, his gentleness and his broad sympathies, but these were only fruits of his humility before God and his love for his fellow men, born of his devotion to Jesus Christ.

His nature was fundamentally religious and his character was absolutely the fruit of his faith. He was not a gentleman who was religious; he was a gentleman because he was religious. He was full of grace because his life was full of the love of God. His religion was never offensive. He never thrust it upon men; it radiated from him. Those who heard him speak felt that his words were not those of one who lives by bread alone, and those who were closely associated with him realized that all his motives had their origin in a realm where few men dwell.

Mr. Capen always held to the theory that men—even the most worldly of men—respond most readily to the moral and religious note in public addresses. He was impatient when public speakers tried to tickle the ear of their hearers by funny stories. He thought it not only a waste of precious time but an insult to the intelligence of men. They are ready, he believed, to listen to something better, and to feed them with sop when they are waiting for meat, seemed to him an unpardonable sin.

At a recent meeting of the Massachusetts Peace Society one of the best known of England's scholars presented the economic argument in favor of arbitration instead of war. Then Alfred Noyes, the young English poet, presented with much force and grace the moral and religious arguments, fairly hypnotizing his audience and calling forth a most enthusiastic response. As he was returning from the meeting, Mr. Capen re-

marked, "It is that argument which reaches men every time. They respond to it as they do to no other." He himself never spoke without sounding the highest note. He never wasted his time in cheap stories while making an approach. He plunged into the very heart of his theme in the first minute, speaking out of his consecrated life with such earnestness that his audiences not only listened respectfully but also responded heartily.

During the last years of his life Mr. Capen followed the principle of speaking upon distinctly religious topics before gatherings of men who represented wholly secular interests. He was constantly receiving invitations to address men's clubs, Chambers of Commerce and various other organizations for civic improvement, but he refused to accept them unless he could speak upon some of those themes which were dearest to his heart. As a result many gatherings of men listened to addresses bespeaking deeper interest in foreign missions, even though they had never manifested any interest in this subject, and had sometimes even referred to it with scorn. If Mr. Capen did not give the entire time of an address to this theme it was sure to be introduced before he concluded. The cause of Jesus Christ, the coming of brotherhood, or the application of some phase of the teaching of the Nazarene to human affairs, was sure to be included in his message. Men, though often not avowed disciples, listened to him with respect and were won to active sympathy.

Mr. Capen believed that clergymen lose great opportunities when they go before secular gatherings and make an effort merely to please instead of endeavoring to raise the ideals of their hearers. More than once large companies of men have laughed and applauded at the jokes and brilliancy of some speaker who used half an hour in entertaining them, and then have sat with serious but sympathetic faces, without a ripple of laughter, listening to this layman as he presented the great work of establishing the Kingdom of God on earth, and at the close of his address the generous applause which he received showed that his audiences appreciated his fine courage.

Mr. Capen had absolutely no use for the old rule that when you are in Rome you must do as the Romans do. He despised that worst form of unbelief abroad in the world today, a lack of confidence in the moral ideal; he deplored the ease with which men desert it and resort to the cheap ways of the world to attain their ends. He believed that right was might and that if men would be true to their idealism it would win. Writing in the "Christian Endeavor World," he gave an illustration of this principle from his own life: "I had an experience years ago upon the School Committee, when a number of gentlemen came to me and urged that I should use my influence in the appointment of a janitor for a schoolhouse. Their one argument for this appointment was that he was a 'good worker' in the ward, and his appointment would be helpful for party interests.

When I told them that this argument did not count now, and gave them to understand that there were higher considerations, they looked at me in bewilderment. They did not seem to understand the alphabet of such a language. And yet my experience has shown that in such cases, if one is courteous, men will soon see the force of his position, and underneath will respect him for it."

We sometimes find more light in the life of a good man on some controverted passage of Scripture than we do in all the commentaries, or in the wise arguments of the theologians. In Mr. Capen's faith in the might of right we find more illumination on the old text which has been the source of such heated controversies between Protestants and Catholics than in volumes of their dry-as-dust books: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I shall build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

He so believed the truth in this passage that he dared to stand with a few men against some public wrong where most men despaired, remained at home and gave the host of wickedness their way. He once wrote: "Even one or two men may have great influence for good, as I have learned from an experience which occurred so many years ago that it may be spoken of now quite impersonally. There was a plan on foot by a lot of very selfish politicians to control public interests for their own ends. A public meeting was held, and I was called upon to preside. A gentleman of high integrity was appointed to act as clerk, and then

the battle began. The selfish men tried to accomplish their end, but they were entirely defeated, though the chairman, as they themselves admitted, treated them with absolute fairness. It transpired afterwards that they had planned to capture that meeting in furtherance of their own schemes. When upbraided afterwards by some of their followers, they said, 'How could we succeed when that presiding officer was watching us all the time?' The chairman and the clerk of that meeting prevented a public wrong.''

## CHAPTER XV

## CHARACTERISTICS

I have dwelt at length upon Mr. Capen's religious nature because apart from this it is impossible to understand the man. It would be easy to write a biography setting him forth as a public-spirited citizen who did much good, utilizing to the utmost every talent with which he had been endowed. It would even be possible to picture him as a man who was of great service to mankind, and who was intensely religious, dividing the two sides of his nature. Either view would fail to give us the man. He was a Christian first and last and he was everything else because he was a Christian.

Out of this life of devotion to Jesus Christ grew certain characteristics which made him one of the exceedingly useful men produced by the Church in his generation. Among the most conspicuous of these was the element of grace. "That beautiful courtesy," wrote Mrs. North, "which is the very flower of Christian character, the outward and visible sign of the grace of Christ within, made fellowship with him, even in the most laborious hours, a delight." He never lost his patience and never showed any sign of irritation when serving as a presiding officer or on a committee. He listened to every argument, gave every

party to a controversy equal consideration, and made every person feel that he was absolutely fair. Though his desk in his store on Washington Street was always piled high with letters waiting for an answer, or business needing attention, no man ever sought him there who was not received with courtesy. He had that peculiar gift of making every man feel that he was especially glad to see him, that he was interested in all his affairs, and that he stood ready to serve him in any possible way.

Every Sunday morning when he was at home Mr. Capen stood at the end of the aisle in his church and shook hands with people as they passed from the auditorium. Probably more than one minister in the church has felt that Mr. Capen was the best antidote to a poor sermon that could possibly be found. A warm handshake, a smile that lit up other faces as by contagion, a few words—"I am glad to see you; hope you are all well"—sent scores of people from the church feeling that life was worth while, even though the sermon may have failed of its purpose.

After the church service men and women in trouble and those seeking advice gathered about him. He not only had time to see them but even made them feel that it was a privilege to serve them—that they had really conferred a favor upon him in seeking him out. While he never permitted any man to trespass upon his time, possessing an unusually gracious way of ending the conference when the business was done, yet when

the one seeking advice went from his presence it was with the feeling that of all men on the earth Mr. Capen was especially glad to have seen him. This capacity for cordiality is a gift which we usually associate with insincerity and hypocrisy, the sham courtesy that arises in polite society or develops in men seeking power and influence. But no one ever associated this gift in Mr. Capen with insincerity. It arose out of the unusual grace of his manner and his eagerness to serve every man in need.

He was absolutely forgetful of himself so long as there was any service he could render others. This element of his character found beautiful illustration in what was one of the most trying hours of his life. In his last years he was called upon to bear a great disappointment and sorrow. When he was in the midst of it, when his heart was heavy and he was bearing the sting from one whom he had tried to help but who had proven himself ungrateful, he was sought for advice and comfort by a man to whose family he had been a lifelong friend and counselor. A great sorrow had come upon them and Mr. Capen was naturally the one to give advice. He spent the evening with this man, comforting, advising and praying, as though he had not a care of his own, until it came time for the man to go. Then, putting his arm around the man's shoulders, he drew him close and, calling him by name, said, "I, too, am bearing this night the greatest burden of my life." It was said not to cast his load upon another but to

give the man the consciousness of fellowship in suffering.

Indeed, so far as his own troubles were concerned, as is often true of such men, outside of the comfort of his family he had to bear them alone. Men were so accustomed to rest upon him that it never occurred to them that they might enter into his sorrows and carry his burdens. So far as his life was concerned, there was no man of his community about whom less was known. He was in a high sense an isolated and lonely figure, ministering but not being ministered unto, comforting but not being comforted.

The second element which contributed to his success was his capacity for hard work. The old expression, "a self-made man," often contains as much error as truth. So many factors enter into the building of a man, largely forces contributed by society, that at best a self-made man is the one who has the will to utilize the opportunities within his reach, the man who has the moral courage to make the most of his inheritance and of the elements offered to him by his fellow men.

Mr. Capen was a conspicuous illustration of this type of man. Not born as a genius towering in intellect or imagination above his fellow men, a meteor shooting through a dimly-lighted sky, he had through his life a physical equipment below the average. Mentally he was not brilliant above his fellows, either in his power to create great ideas or in his ability to conceive plans that were to change the destiny of empires. His public ut-

terances were not those of a heaven-born orator, destined to be read by future generations or to be seed germs out of which are to grow great schemes of thought, nor were they explosives that are to cause revolutions in the realm of society or politics. He was only one of the great brotherhood, enjoying like gifts and powers with the great mass of mankind, but he was unlike many of his fellows in that he possessed the heaven-born capacity of utilizing to the utmost extent every power nature and society had placed within his reach.

After all our sentiments are reduced to the realm of fact, it is this element that creates that peculiar character we call a genius. Occasionally there is one set apart from his mother's womb who is to write lines that will be an inspiration to all time, speak words that will be a model for all aspiring orators or catch the symphonies from the spheres that will stir the emotions of all succeeding generations. On the whole, however, a genius is a man with a capacity for hard work who utilizes every minute of his time and who turns every power within his reach to the achievement of some great end.

In this sense Mr. Capen was a genius among the men of his time. His life has been an inspiration to the entire religious family and his conduct and accomplishments have placed him in that unique position where he was justly called the leading layman of his city because of his ability to turn every faculty with which nature and soci-

ety had endowed him toward the uplift of his fellow men along some line of their growth.

Not only was he capable of doing sustained hard work but he had an unusual faculty of utilizing every minute of his time. Only a few weeks before sailing on his journey to the Orient, he said one evening to a friend, while on his way home from his office, "I have had today an engagement every fifteen minutes." This was not an unusual experience with him; but to be able to block out time in this way—to meet an engagement and without permitting men to rob you of your time to end it and then pass to the next—is a gift possessed by few men.

Even his Sundays were regulated by rule. He rose and ate breakfast, after which he looked over the lesson for his Men's Bible Class. Then with his family he went to church. If he had visitors in his home they were invited to go with him, but they could never keep him and his family from divine worship. Neither did he ever take them to another church to hear some famous preacher. After the morning service he taught his Bible Class. Then followed his dinner and an hour and a half of rest. At four o'clock he was called by some member of the household, when he arose and started for two hours of calling through the parish, either on members of his Class who had been absent or upon some new family who had just moved into the parish, or on some person who was sick or in need. At six o'clock the family gathered for a lunch, after which he spent the evening

in preparing the next Sunday's lesson for his Bible Class.

To say that he never played would not be quite true. He found not only supreme delight but pleasure in his work and his home was a veritable playground. No finer tribute could be paid to his joyous companionship with his children than is to be found in the dedication of "Social Progress in Mission Lands," written by his son, Edward Warren Capen.

"TO MY FATHER
THE IDOL OF MY BOYHOOD
COMPANION OF MY MANHOOD
ALWAYS LIVING IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD
PASSIONATELY DEVOTED TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD
IN ADVOCACY OF PEACE
IN CIVIC REFORM
IN MISSIONARY LEADERSHIP
WHO WENT HOME FROM THE FIRING-LINE."

Not only was he blessed with a wife who had the genius for conducting the household so that there was no friction or disturbance in its management, no petty cares left to worry or annoy, but he was the head of a home where each studied to make the other happy and to lighten the other's burden. Added to this was a fine sense of humor, that divine gift which enables some to laugh when others weep and which enables some to discover delightful vistas all along the way where others are only pricked by thorns. The dinner-table was

a place for story-telling and there was scarcely a night after the day's work when the home did not ring with laughter over a good story some member of the family had found during the day.

Yet no one could really think of Mr. Capen as attending a football game between the colleges, much less a game of baseball between teams of the American League, not because he disapproved of these forms of recreation but because he was too busy to use his time in these ways. He always had more duties waiting for him than he could perform and he used every minute, including holidays, which were the days when he prepared many of his addresses, to contribute toward the results he hoped to accomplish.

He once said to a company of ministers: "The pulpits would have more power if the preachers had more method. I have known cases where men wasted their time the first of the week, to be driven at the end almost to distraction. Such shiftlessness would ruin any modern business. My wife can pack twice as much into a trunk as I can, for she knows how to economize the space. The man who methodically and systematically economizes his time can pack twice as much work into a year. The work of the ministry is too noble to be injured by carelessness." No man ever followed more faithfully his preaching on this point than Mr. Capen, and this accounts to a large degree for his success. He used all his capital all the time.

Another marked element in his success was his

ability to say, "This one thing I do," and to give no thought to anything which did not contribute to the purpose he had before him. When he was a member of the School Committee that work absorbed his attention. All his reading was on school problems, and whenever he visited another city he utilized his time in interviews and observations that would add to his knowledge. When he was active in the Municipal League he read the best books on the city problem and acquainted himself with the best thought of reformers.

He probably knew the opinions of more men concerning the issues with which he was struggling than many who had devoted their lives to the questions, because he lost no time and wasted no opportunities to make himself thoroughly informed. There was only one thing which made him hesitate to accept the Presidency of the American Board, and that was his lack of knowledge of the mission fields and the methods of work of the missionary societies. He had always been deeply interested in foreign missions and he had been a liberal giver to this work but, absorbed in other duties, he had given little time to the problems confronting the Board. When, however, he decided to accept the Presidency he centered his attention on these problems and by his reading, observations and study, became one of the best-informed men on the missionary problem that this generation produced. Concentration was one of the secrets of his power, and by shutting out everything from his life that did not contribute to

his usefulness he became an unusually effective man in whatever he undertook.

He used to say that he could drive work but when work drove him it wore upon him. As a result, with his unusually methodical life, he seldom reached a place where he was crowded by his tasks, but planned his activities so far ahead that he was continually driving his work. Scarcely did he complete one annual address for the American Board before he began to plan the next. First, he chose his theme, and then his reading during the year, his conversation and observation were made to contribute to it. He would talk with every man he found who knew anything about the problem with which he was to deal, and weeks before the time to deliver the message he would have much more material than he could use. It was this fact, doubtless, which accounted for the impression, always left upon his hearers, that he had much more to say than his time limit would permit. After the collecting of material came the process of writing, which was always done carefully. When completed the addresses were usually submitted to critics, especially for the purpose of eliminating anything that might make an undesirable impression, for, after all his hard work, the material of his address was only of secondary importance. He had an object to accomplish, and his matter was only a means to this end. Each important speech he was to make on his journey through the mission fields was carefully written and it was forwarded to leading missionaries in India, China and Japan

with the special request that anything might be penciled which was not fitted to the Oriental mind. This was especially true of the address on peace he was to have given in Japan, where he was very anxious not to sound any discordant note.

This habit of preparedness manifested itself in the smallest details of his life and in the most unexpected places. Even when he was called suddenly to make an address he almost invariably gave the impression that he was an easy speaker and a man so familiar with political, civic or religious subjects that he could talk without preparation. Nothing, however, could be further from the fact. He seldom spoke without the most careful planning. If he was to attend any meeting where he thought there was the least possibility that he might be called upon to express his opinion, he either wrote out in full what he wanted to say or else made headings that he could follow. This habit became so much a part of his life that there were few times when he was ever asked to speak that he was not ready to deliver a message.

This habit of preparation found no better illustration in the life of Mr. Capen than in the talks he gave at the mid-week prayer service of his church. Men who attended these meetings will remember these weekly talks as among the most helpful utterances which came from his busy life. They usually occupied about five minutes—seldom more than ten—and they never failed to produce a spiritual impression or to convey some valuable information. But they were never extempora-

neous. It was seldom that he trusted himself to the inspiration of the hour. Each Friday night, the evening for his prayer service, after he had eaten his dinner, he would go by himself for a few minutes to think over the subject that was to be discussed, carefully arranging what he wanted to present, and then he would go to the meeting with the consciousness that he had a message. If half a dozen of the strongest men of every church would follow the same habit, the prayer service would be the most helpful meeting in the life of the Church.

## CHAPTER XVI

## THE LAST DAYS, AND RESUME

There can be no satisfaction in dwelling at length on the incident of death. It was never a question upon which Mr. Capen placed great emphasis. Life was the thing of importance to him, and it is his life that will be remembered. He always regarded death as the opening of a door through which man would pass, taking with him the good or the evil he had done. True, he considered it the most important door through which a man would go, but the seriousness of the entrance came not from the door itself but from the life that had been lived before the entrance was made, from the material that had been woven into the texture of character that one would carry into the presence of the just Judge. The chief concern with him was in living right on the earth. The final result was in the care of one who knew all things and would deal with the departed more wisely than man possibly could. Our only reason for adding this chapter is that we may answer certain questions which are naturally raised by the sudden ending of a life which seemed to be in the very height of its usefulness.

The end came very quickly. On Sunday, January 18, Mr. Capen spoke in three churches in Foochow. In the afternoon he wrote a long letter

to his Bible Class in Jamaica Plain. Monday was a hard day. He rose at three-thirty A. M. and went with the missionaries to dedicate a new church at Diong Loh, yet after a long day of tramping, speech-making and sight-seeing he seemed no more tired than the younger men. He enjoyed it all and on Tuesday was especially helpful at a conference about the proposed Union University, encouraging the workers to believe that their project could be accomplished.

He sailed for Shanghai on January 22, and had a very comfortable trip in the best boat on the line. There was no hard wind and the sea was fairly calm. He reached Shanghai Saturday morning about ten o'clock and went directly to Mr. Evans' Missionary Home. In the afternoon, with his family and Dr. Strong, he attended a reception at the International Institute, where he spoke on peace. Sunday morning he gave an address at the Union Church, and never spoke better. In a letter written just before reaching Shanghai he told how happy he and the others of the party were that they were so far on their journey and were so well. They were planning to spend the week in Shanghai and he was to attend a meeting of the China Continuation Committee on the thirtieth.

Monday morning after breakfast he had a chill, fainted and then had a fever. They called one of the best doctors, who thought all he needed was a rest. On Wednesday he was removed to the Victoria Nursing Home, at the doctor's solicita-

tion in order that he might have better care. He did not anticipate anything serious until Thursday morning, when the symptoms of pneumonia developed. Even then there was only a slight affection in one lung and he spoke very encouragingly. Thursday afternoon Mrs. Capen and her daughter, after spending an hour and a half with Mr. Capen, attended a reception for the United States Consul General, who was a friend of Mr. Capen. That afternoon Mr. Capen spoke of their journey as the Lord's trip and expressed the belief that all would be right. He did not realize how sick he was. He grew much worse during the last part of the afternoon and the family were given rooms in the hospital. They sat by the bedside in the evening while oxygen was being administered, but later they withdrew. A little after one A. M. on Friday, the thirtieth, there came a change. The heart could not stand the strain and he ceased breathing.

There are many, who live more idle lives, who would complain that such a useful man should so prematurely consume his energies. There are some who knew him well and who valued his service who regret that he should have undertaken a journey which placed so heavy a tax upon his strength. We need not linger over their perplexities and queries. We would rather use his death to illustrate his character, believing that thus we may give a better answer than in any argument that could be formed.

There was never an hour from the time when

he entered business, except a few months when his career was interrupted by sickness, during which he was not crowded with work. He always faced more tasks than it seemed possible that a dozen men could accomplish. Much of his work was connected with some sort of leadership, which taxed his physical and mental powers to their utmost. The conduct of a carpet business which for years had the patronage of the wealthiest families of Boston was enough to engage the energies of most men. He was a man with a growing family and did not fail to give his children time for counsel and play. He was a deacon of a church and carried the details of its work, knowing almost as much as the minister about the organization, the cares and burdens and responsibilities of its large membership.

Yet these things occupied only a small part of his time. What might be classed as public duties consumed by far the larger part, especially in the last half of his life. He was sought probably more than any other man in Boston to preside over public meetings. In every reform movement he was one of the leaders, carrying the heaviest burden and placing himself where he bore the brunt of the battle. Hours of his time were given to the conduct of the business of his denomination, and in the last years of his life no one, except the regular secretaries of the American Board, gave more time and energy to the cause of foreign missionary work. Yet this intense and continuous activity, as we have already seen, was a settled

policy of his life. When, in his young manhood, he was sick and battling for life he promised his God that if he should recover his health and be given strength to labor, he would never complain of any work that might be placed upon him. It was a sacred pledge he had made with his Creator and it was never broken. He felt that his life had been saved for a purpose. No minister of the gospel ever believed more truly that he had been called to preach than Mr. Capen believed that he had been called to a great work. This was a faith that was never absent from him. Others might waste their time and refuse burdens; he dared not. He had heard a voice and he must obey. He had seen a heavenly vision and he must follow it. He had heard a call to service and his life, crowded with activities, was an answer to the call.

While sailing from Gibraltar to Naples he wrote a letter to his Bible Class which embodied the principle of his life. "We saw one day a full-rigged ship running before the wind with skysails set, three jibs, the spanker set, crowding every rag of canvas she had. She signaled us to get our position to see if her reckoning was correct. I thought it was a pretty good illustration of what we ought to do. Crowding every sail on the voyage of life, it is wise to take counsel of God and the Bible to make sure we are right and not take any chances."

Yet he was never careless of his health. He realized that his body was frail, that it could stand the strain placed upon it only by the closest

observance of the laws of health. No man was ever more regular in such matters as deep breathing, physical exercises, eating nourishing food and in the right proportion, and regularity of sleep. These things were as sacred to him as his prayers. They were part of his religious exercises. His whole life was consecrated to God, body as well as soul, to be used in a glorious service. He was as anxious not to expose his body to that which would weaken it as he was not to expose his soul to that which would harm it. On his last journey he denied himself the privilege of seeing many mission stations because trips to them would have involved undue exposure to hot sun or rain or unsanitary conditions. Every power of his being was placed at the service of his great Master, and he felt it a sacred obligation to keep himself in the very best condition, so that his service might be most effective.

This vigilance over his physical condition was not spasmodic, as it is in the lives of many men. It was as regular as his devotions, being continued each day through a period of over fifty years. His mother died of tuberculosis and his father also had the disease, though his death came from pneumonia. His brother wasted away from the same terrible plague, and when Mr. Capen was a young man, as we have noticed, he had tuberculosis of the knee. Handicapped by such an inheritance as his, fighting from youth a weak body, and in young manhood suffering wasting disease, most men would have despaired of rendering

large service. But his consecration of will knew no such word as defeat, and by what to most men would have been laborious observance of rules of health he maintained his vigor, and lived, according to the calendar, over seventy years—but by comparison with what most men accomplish he lived twice that length of time.

Indeed it was a part of his gospel that health is found in work, and he often declared that if those men and women who are running to the various cults of healing would lose their lives in some great service they would find both health and happiness. He was disgusted with that attitude toward life that is embodied in the phrase "Save your strength," and his own life ought to do much toward helping to make the disgust more general. The common idea that to each of us is given a certain amount of strength and that if we overdraw on this allotment we must suffer he regarded as a pernicious doctrine. He knew that most human ills grow out of idleness. They spring up in lives which are not absorbed in some great purpose. Life grows by exercise and the more work done, with proper precaution, the more will life increase. The arm does not grow flabby by a constant swinging of the hammer; this continuous toil strengthens the muscles. No blacksmith was ever enfeebled by his work at the anvil.

So Mr. Capen believed that labor of any kind is the greatest source of health and he proved the truth of this principle by his life. Beginning life with a handicap, inheriting a weak body, fighting

for his life against disease, he grew strong in service, becoming more efficient with the passing years; for in his later life he was remarkably free from those diseases which come to old age. If there is any one thing his life pre-eminently teaches it is the life-giving power of severe, continuous and well-managed toil.

There were two elements in his gospel of work which saved him from much of the wear and tear which creeps into many busy lives. He took such a deep joy in his work that no part of it became mechanical. It is drudgery that kills. When our tasks become our masters and stand over us with slave-whips, they lacerate our nerves and deplete our energy. It is not the work but the worry which sends men to early graves. Mr. Capen was deeply interested in whatever he did. His work was not his master, but his friend. His nature was not divided—hands in one place and heart in another. We have already observed that when men sought him for counsel they went from his presence not only feeling that they had been welcome, but also that they had bestowed a compliment upon him in seeking him out. It was a result of the overflowing joy he felt in service. Idleness would have shortened his life, for it would have taken away his deepest satisfaction. Work made his life blessed. The more he had to do, the more his joy was increased.

Added to this fruit of the Spirit was an unbounded optimism. He went through life with the confidence that his cause was sure to rule the

world. When a man loses heart his work drags. Regrets over the past and worries concerning the future consume his energies. He parts with that spirit which makes conquerors and wins battles. Mr. Capen never doubted that the Kingdom of God would cover the earth. The letters he wrote during his journey through India, while revealing the sin, the ignorance and the superstition of the land, were veritable songs of triumph, the one theme being the certainty that Christianity would soon rule the nations. If there were any discouraging conditions confronting his work, whatever they might be, they were overshadowed by this ever-present faith, and the contagion of his optimism touched his fellow workers, carrying them through to victorious results.

When Grover Cleveland was President of the United States, Mr. Capen, with other gentlemen, visited Washington in the interest of the North American Indians. After listening to their case, Mr. Cleveland said: "Gentlemen, I have had a great many people come here to criticize, but you are the first who have come to offer assistance." Mr. Capen seldom criticized. He would not permit himself to dwell on failures and mistakes. He always attacked a problem on its positive side. Not one ounce of his energy was consumed in regrets, in moaning over human failures or sins. This is an attitude of mind that leads to despair and despair always means weakness. He would have nothing to do with this human frailty which cripples Christian workers. He had a Kingdom

to win. He was confident that his Captain could not be defeated and he threw himself into the conflict with the certainty of success.

He not only did his work without the usual wear and tear that shortens life, but he went through life with a companion who helped greatly to make his work easy. He lived in constant and grateful recognition of this fact and often showed his appreciation by relating an experience in the life of Mr. Dwight L. Moody. The great evangelist at one time wanted to talk to a woman on the subject of her salvation, but she held in her arms a crying baby and serious conversation was impossible. Finally, one of the Christian workers, standing near, took the baby and gave the evangelist an opportunity to accomplish his purpose. Mr. Moody used to say that the unnamed worker who held the baby did as much toward the woman's salvation as he had done. Mr. Capen would tell the story and would declare that he was able to accomplish much of his work because he was saved by his wife from many of the worries and cares of life. She knew how to make a home a veritable haven of rest, where the tired body could find recuperation and the active mind could enter into peace. When Mr. Capen came from his busy day and entered his house, he was always welcomed by loving hearts, a wife and a daughter, who studied to save him from every possible care, who anticipated every desire, and, so far as was reasonable, withheld every anxiety.

Mr. Capen was an idealist in his attitude toward

life in general, but especially in his attitude toward the family. In the presence of women he was chivalry incarnate. He was never heard to indulge in any of those pleasantries which minimize her character nor to participate in any of those supposed bits of humor savoring of sarcasm or irony which men often pass with their wives or friends. He was always not only dignified but reverent before womanhood, and this attitude, while always a part of his nature, was intensified by his association with a wife who commanded love and respect and who made a home in which a man could be at his best and do his greatest work.

He wanted to "die in the harness." His wish was granted by the good Father he had always trusted. And could there have been a better spot for him to cease from his labors? His life will ever be associated with the cause of missions. No country was more interesting to him than China. There seems a peculiar fitness that in this land he should have lain down to sleep. When the news flashed across the seas, "Father glorified," his closest friends felt that in those two words his biography had been written. He had lived as an inspiration to thousands. He had stood for a faith that made him a spiritual example to laymen and ministers. His life had been spent on the earth but only to make earth a heaven. Now in the very height of his power, in intense activity in the cause he loved best, he went home. He died in the battle. His cause will win.