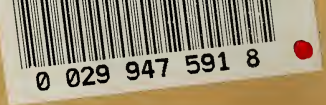


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Troy Young Men's Association.

THE following papers contain an account of the early efforts, made in the village and city of Troy, to educate the people by the publication of books, by the establishment of the old Troy Library, and by the providing and maintenance of lectures on scientific subjects. They also contain many facts as to the organization of the Troy Young Men's Association, its progress and present condition, and its capabilities for disseminating information. These papers were prepared by MR. BENJ. H. HALL, at the request of the present Executive Committee of the Troy Young Men's Association, and were first presented to the public in the columns of the *Troy Daily Times* of October 30th, 31st, and November 1st, 2d and 3d, 1877, by the courtesy of the proprietors of that journal. They are now republished in their present form by the Executive Committee aforesaid, in the hope of impressing more permanently upon the minds of the citizens of Troy the importance of maintaining the institution to which they specially relate.

TROY, N. Y., *November 28th*, 1877.

FIRST PAPER.

Whatever ideas may prevail respecting the character and nature of true government, one principle generally allowed to be correct is that the society or combination which assures the greatest amount of good to the greatest number at a moderate cost, and which is based upon intelligent principles of membership and privileges, is worthy of commendation and support. We have in our city many organizations, the objects of which are as varied as their names. Some are confessedly of a religious nature, drawing their general inspiration from the ideas of Christianity, but impressing their peculiar interpretation of that belief in a variety of sectarian forms. Others are organized for the purpose of affording companionship in health, relief in sickness, and proper attention at death. Others still are purely recreative, instructive or social in their character. For the privileges which each affords to its members, voluntary contributions are expected, or dues, in many instances almost burdensome, are required.

The privileges afforded by the Troy Young Men's Association are more varied and are supplied at a less cost than those of any other organization equally uncircumscribed, in this city, and yet our citizens of late years have failed to take advantage of these privileges, and in consequence the Association has failed to do the good which it is capable of accomplishing. Its predecessor was the old Troy Library, an institution whose collection of books was ordinarily kept in

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the office of some one of the lawyers of the village, and afterwards youthful city of Troy. This early organization was just a step beyond a circulating library. Yet an examination of such of its volumes as now form a part of the library of the Young Men's Association shows that they were well thumbed and at the same time carefully handled by the readers of that day. To this early collection of books was doubtless due much of the culture and literary taste which pervaded Troy even in its earliest days. The Troy Library was founded in the year 1800, and numbered among its officers and patrons the principal people of the village. In the year 1816, when the village became a city, it had become an important factor in supplying literary pabulum to the community, and from 1817 to 1820 it contained from 630 to 692 volumes on its shelves.

The tone of intelligence which marked the lives and characters of the former generations who dwelt on this spot is manifest in many ways. Besides the effect produced by the books which our fathers read, there was a most beneficial influence exerted by the early booksellers of Troy. That the culture of manners was not then neglected is evident from the fact that here was printed during the latter part of the last century the first treatise on dancing known to have been published in the United States. Means were also employed to provide religious, moral, educational and literary entertainment. Previous to the year 1820, the following books, among others, emanated from the printing presses of Troy: Joseph Hawkins's *Voyage to Africa* was printed for the author by Luther Pratt in 1797, and passed to a second edition. Obadiah Penniman & Co., in 1803 printed "Observations on the Medical and Domestic Management of the Consumptive; on the powers of *Digitalis Purpurea*; and on the cure of *Schrophula* by Thomas Beddoes, M. D.," and in the same year "Thomas Collier on River street" printed Robert Barclay's *Catechism*, which found a ready sale among the Quakers who lived here and in this vicinage. In 1804 Benjamin Gorton, supposed to be Troy's earliest author, and a tallow chandler by profession, enlightened the world by his work entitled "Primitive Christianity Revived," and it was "printed by Moffitt & Lyon for the author." In the same year, O. Penniman & Co. published the third American edition of "Goldsmith's Roman History, abridged by himself for the use of schools." But a new era in literature dawned on this beautiful valley and set the jealous Albanians in a frenzy of rage, when in 1806 the *First American Edition* of "*Hudibras*, in three parts; written in the time of the late wars. By Samuel Butler, esq. With Annotations and a Complete Index," was "printed and sold at the Rensseler Book-store by Wright, Goodenow & Stockwell." This was followed in 1807 by the *first American edition* of the "Letters of the late Lord Lyttleton, complete in one volume," from the press of the publishers of the *Hudibras* before named, and the fame of this daring venture reached not only to Gotham but actually disturbed the equanimity of the *politesse* of Boston and Philadelphia, and gave rise to many forebodings, not only that the "course of empire" was taking an eternal flight westward, but that civilization and letters were following in her train. The year 1808 was made still more famous by publications relating to travel, religion and physic. Wright, Goodenow & Stockwell, still to the fore, published "A View of the Nervous Temperament," by Thomas Trotter, M. D., and "Travels in the Year 1806, by the Marquis de Salvo," adorning the latter work with a frontispiece on copper, of the brave and gallant marquis, in which he is represented with a broad expanse of cravat and collar, and a head of hair which looks as though the marquis, if there was such a lady, had had a hand in it, or as if he had borrowed the frizzle of some woman of fashion. The other publication was from the press of Oliver Lyon, and was entitled, "A View of Spiritual or Anti-Typical Babylon," by the light-diffusing Gorton.

In the year 1809 Parker & Bliss sent out the "Fifth Troy Edition" of "The American Preceptor" by Caleb Bingham, and three years later uttered "The Complaint; or Night Thoughts," of the late Dr. Edward Young. It was in this year also (1812) that the same firm published "An Account of the People called Shakers," by "Thomas Brown of Cornwall, Orange county, State of New York," and in 1814 they sent out Jedidiah Morse's "Geography Made Easy," having reprinted it from the sixteenth Boston edition. During the year 1815 they strove to infuse a love of the art of eloquence in the breasts of the young men

of that period by publishing the "Sixth Troy Edition" of Caleb Bingham's "Columbian Orator."

These are examples of the publications which the early booksellers of Troy sent forth from their presses and shops for the instruction of the people. They were purchased and read by the citizens, and gave tone to society. And by their aid and by the aid of the circulating volumes of the old Troy Library, the early habits and manners and life of this community were founded in intelligence and in a love of knowledge. Are we doing all we can to maintain these foundations firm and secure?

SECOND PAPER.

In their efforts to exert a direct beneficial influence upon the lives and character of the former generation of this community, the booksellers and the Troy Library were not left alone. A powerful impetus was given to scientific research by the establishment of the Troy Lyceum of Natural History, under the guidance of Prof. Amos Eaton, Dr. Moses Hale and Dr. Ira M. Wells, "for the purpose of encouraging the study and disseminating a knowledge of Natural History and the other sciences." The incorporators were James Dalaby, Richard P. Hart, Isaac McConibe, Dr. Ely Burrirt and George Tibbits, names, all of which, except the first, are associated in the minds of those of our citizens who were boys 40 years ago, as belonging to men to whom Troy is indebted for much of its early fame and present position. A better idea of the breadth of the character of this Society may be obtained by stating that among its first officers John D. Dickinson was president, David Buel, Jr., was second vice-president, Dr. Amatus Robbins, corresponding secretary, and Dr. Moses Hale one of the curators. "A year from its commencement it numbered among its members some of the most celebrated men in the United States, and the publications of its transactions were circulated from one end of the country to the other. This was, indeed, the first society of the kind in America." In the efforts of Prof. Amos Eaton, as manifested in his philosophical and scientific lectures, and by his publications, the community found a secure and abiding basis for scientific and literary work and development. Original himself in his modes of thought and methods of mental progress, he aided in educating from his pupils every latent taste for science or natural history which they possessed, and was the first among Americans to classify the teachings of nature as they manifest themselves in the stratifications of the rocks, in the internal resources of the earth, and in the growth and character of plants. Aided by influences such as these, the time came when—population having increased beyond the limits of a neighborhood settlement—it became necessary to provide more general means for accommodating all who desired it with such mental food as would enable them to develop the power of the mind ratably with the growth and maturity of the body.

The first step in the direction indicated was taken at a meeting convened in the Mayor's court room on Friday evening, November 28, 1834, "to decide upon the expediency of providing a course of public lectures during the coming winter, and to discuss the propriety of organizing a young men's association." At this, the initial meeting, the late John T. McCoun, honorably remembered by all who knew him, presided, and the secretary was that learned and well known citizen who still in his old age rejoices in the prosperity of the city, Alexander McCall. A committee was then appointed to draft a constitution and report the same on some future occasion. At a meeting held on the 12th of December following, this committee, consisting of Giles B. Kellogg, Thomas Coleman, Martin I. Townsend, Ralph Hawley and Thaddeus B. Bigelow, presented a form of constitution which was accepted, and five persons from each of the four wards of the city were designated to obtain signatures to this instrument. So successful were they in their efforts that in a week from the time of their designation they had obtained the names of 426 signers to the constitution. On the evening of Friday, December 19, 1834, this gratifying success was formally reported by the committee at a meeting held at the court house, and immediately thereafter John T. McCoun was elected the first president of the Association. The remaining officers were chosen a few days later,

on the evening of Wednesday, the 22d of December. These were David L. Seymour, first vice president; Henry Landon, second vice president; Thomas Coleman, third vice president; John T. Lampport, recording secretary; Giles B. Kellogg, corresponding secretary; and Charles E. Seymour, treasurer. The managers were Wm. H. Van Schoonhoven, Isaac J. Merritt, Henry Rousseau, Jared S. Weed, John S. Perry, Levinus Vanderheyden, Lorenzo Cadwell, Brigham L. Eaton, Harvey Warner and Lorenzo D. Baker. The officers of the Debating Society were George Gould, president; George W. Francis, first vice president; Henry T. Eddy, second vice president; and Ralph Hawley, secretary. The first rooms occupied by the society in February, 1835, were in the second story of No. 197 River street, then owned by Abraham Fellows. As an evidence of the vigor of this institution near the time of its inception, we print the following statement of its condition at the close of its first winter:

"The rooms of the society are large and convenient, one of which is devoted exclusively to newspapers, both foreign and from every part of the Union. There are now on file more than 100 different papers. Another room is occupied by the library and the literary periodical publications, where may be found most, the best at any rate, of the American literary journals and the reprints of the foreign. The library numbers about 1000 volumes of standard and substantial works. The Debating Society meets once a week. During the winter two lectures a week have been delivered, which were fully attended."

The first annual meeting under the constitution was held on Monday evening, February 16, 1835, at which time the membership of the Association was 450.

The Association was incorporated as such by an act of the Legislature passed April 20, 1835. Their general object was stated to be "mutual improvement," and their corporate powers granted "for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a library, reading-rooms, literary and scientific lectures, and other means of promoting moral and intellectual improvement." For such purposes power was given them to "take by purchase, devise or otherwise, and to hold, transfer and convey, real and personal property," and "to take, hold and convey, all such books, cabinets, library, furniture and apparatus as may be necessary for attaining the objects and carrying into effect the purposes of said corporation." The control of the Association was vested in an executive committee to be annually elected. By the same act a debating society was also recognized as existing, and so long as the corporation should choose to continue it as a department of the Association, the officers of the Debating Society were declared to be *ex-officio* members of the said executive committee.

Thus championed by the State and officered by men who had an eye single and observant for the maintenance and advancement of the Association, its position was secured, and it entered at once upon a course of beneficent prosperity. Its list of presidents comprehends the names of some of the most active and intelligent citizens who, during the last forty years, have aided in the growth, mental, moral and material, of the city. We append the list entire, in the hope that our citizens, as they read it, will ponder well the question whether they can willingly let die an organization so useful as is this, and to whose advancement so many men devoted so many days of the best portion of their youthful and bright lives.

THE PRESIDENTS.

1835.... John T. McCoun,	1849 ... Amos K. Hadley,	1864... C. O. Greene,
1836... Thaddeus B. Bigelow,	1850.... David B. Cox,	1865.... Clarence Willard,
1837... Henry W. Strong,	1851... G. B. Wallace,	1865.... Charles A. Holmes,
1838... George Gould,	1852... William Gurley,	1866.... Frederick P. Allen,
1839... Isaac J. Merritt,	1853... George B. Warren, Jr.,	1867.... William E. Gilbert,
1840... James M. Stevenson,	1854... Wm. H. Young,	1868.... Benj. F. Follett,
1841... Charles H. Read,	1855... Lyman R. Avery,	1869.... J. S. Garnsey,
1842... J. L. VanSchoonhoven,	1856... W. O. Cunningham,	1870-71. William D. Clegg,
1843... Joseph White,	1857... DeWitt Tuthill,	1872... Edgar L. Fursman,
1844... Thomas Coleman,	1858... Charles L. Aiden,	1873... Edward G. Gilbert,
1845... John G. Britton,	1859... Benjamin H. Hall,	1874... Irving Hayner,
1847... William Hagen,	1860... John M. Landon,	1875... I. G. Thompson,
1848... Gilbert Robertson, Jr.,	1861... Nelson Davenport,	1876... Latham C. Strong,
1848.... Uri Gilbert,	1862... Andrew B. Fales,	1877... William Shaw.
	1863... John L. Flagg,	

THIRD PAPER.

The high character of those connected with the Association at its organization brought it most prominently before the public and gave it a position of influence and respectability which insured its success. The receipts of 1835, the first year of its existence, were \$2,846, the number of life members being 33, and of regular members 443. The total number of books was 1,222. From this small beginning the library has grown to its present dimensions and importance. The additions made have varied from 50 to 2,750 volumes annually. Of the general character of this collection, it can be truthfully said that no society of a similar nature in the State outside of the city of New York has upon its shelves and in its possession so many works of abiding and intrinsic value as that of the Troy Young Men's Association. In a survey as limited as is this, it is impossible to particularize to any great extent, and yet we cannot convey any definite idea of the worth of this library unless specific works are mentioned.

Of the larger works contained in the library the following are some of the most conspicuous: "The American Archives," in 9 volumes; "American Almanac," complete in 30 volumes; "Reports of the American Institute"; "Silliman's American Journal of Science and Art," in 90 or more volumes; the *American Whig Review*, in 16 volumes; the *Analectic Magazine*, in 16 volumes; "Dodsley's Annual Register," in over 100 volumes; the *Monthly Review*, in 185 volumes; *Blackwood's Magazine*, in over 100 volumes; "Audubon's Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America," in five magnificent elephant folio volumes of plates; the *Banker's Magazine*, in 25 or more volumes; "Donovan's Natural History of British Birds, Fishes, Insects, Quadrupeds and Shells," in 39 volumes, bound in 21; "Gould's Birds of Asia and from the Himalaya Mountains," and his Monographs of the Partridges of America, of the Toucans, of the Humming Birds, and of the Trogons, a publication in many parts, and illustrated with most accurately colored folio plates; "Jardine's Naturalist's Library," in 40 volumes; Bohn's antiquarian, classical, ecclesiastical, illustrated, philological and philosophical, scientific and standard libraries, besides his British classics, collegiate series, extra volumes and library of French memoirs, numbering in all 360 volumes; Mrs. Loudon's beautiful books on "Ladies' Flower Gardens"; the British Classics in eight volumes; the British Poets in 105 volumes; the British Theatre in six volumes, the Camden Society publications in 51 volumes; six of the earliest books of Common Prayer, in small folio; the *Cultivator* in many volumes; the *Eclectic Magazine* in 47 volumes; the Edinburgh Cabinet Library, in 38 volumes; the *Edinburgh Review* in 130 volumes; "Encyclopædia Britannica," in 21 volumes; "Journal of the Franklin Institute of Pennsylvania" in 85 volumes; the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 240 volumes; "Lardner's Museum of Science and Art," in nine volumes; the "Minor Drama" in 21 volumes; the "Modern Standard Drama" in 27 volumes; the "Modern British Essayists," in 19 volumes; "New British Theatre" in four volumes; the Percy Society publications in 29 volumes; the "Repository of Arts and Manufactures" in 30 volumes, and of patent inventions in 32 volumes; also, the Shakespeare Society's publications in 46 volumes.

Other larger works, are the "Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge" in 17 volumes; "Smithsonian Collections" in 9 volumes; "Sparks's Library of American Biography" in 25 volumes; "Miss Strickland's Lives" in 30 volumes; "Lardner's Cabinet Cyclopædia" in 131 volumes; the *Eclectic Magazine* in 70 volumes; "Harleian Miscellany" in 12 volumes; *North American Review* in 110 volumes; *North British Review* in 45 volumes; "Penny Cyclopædia" in 14 volumes; "Appleton's Cyclopædia" in 16 volumes; "Bibliotheca Sacra" in 30 volumes; *Democratic Review* in 31 volumes; *Harper's Magazine* in 54 volumes; *Harper's Weekly* in 21 volumes; *Westminster Review* in 100 volumes; "Holinshed's Chronicles of England" in 6 volumes; "Costume in England;" "Early English Text Society's Publications" in 25 volumes; "Didron's Christian Iconography;" Mrs. Jameson's delightful works on Sacred and Legendary Art, on the "Legends of the Monastic Orders" and of the "Madonna;" "Costume of the Clans;" "The Orators of Ireland" in 5 volumes; "Rawlinson's Ancient Monarchies" in 5 volumes; the "Breeches Bible;" historical collections of the New York, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island

Historical Societies and of the American Colonial Church ; Annual of Scientific Discovery ; and a large number of bound periodicals, also encyclopædias, works of reference, consultation and illustration.

Here also are to be found the writings of Arnold, Addison, Alison, John Adams, Aristotle, Bacon, the venerable Bede, Bancroft, Beecher, Bossuet, Brougham, the Brownings, Bryant, Burke, Burns, Beaumont and Fletcher, Byron, Campbell, Carlyle, Channing, Choate, Chateaubriand, Chaucer, Cicero, Coleridge, Cousin, Cowper, Crabbe, Curtis, Dryden, De Quincey, Demosthenes, Emerson, Fenelon, Froude, Franklin, Gibbon, Goethe, Goldsmith, Guizot, Hallam, Hamerton, Hamilton, Hawthorne, Hazlitt, Herbert, Holmes, Homer, Hood, Howitt, Humboldt, Irving, Jonson, Johnson, Knight, Lamartine, Lamb, A. Lincoln, Locke, Longfellow, Madison, Marshall, Everett, Michelet, Hugh Miller, Milton, Massinger, Monstretet, Moore, More, Lady Morgan, Niebuhr, T. Parker, Plato, Plutarch, Poe, Pope, Reid, Schiller, Shakespeare, Southey, Spencer, Swedenborg, Tasso, Jeremy Taylor, Bayard Taylor, Taine, Trench, Tuckerman, Parkman, Washington, Webster, Whewell, Whittier, Willis, Wadsworth, Voltaire and Zschokke.

Among the novelists and story writers represented are Grace Aguilar, W. T. Adams, J. Abbott, Miss Alcott, H. Alger, Jr., W. H. Ainsworth, the Bronte Sisters, Miss Bremer, Miss Braddon, Brockden Brown, E. Bray, Bulwer, Cooper, Mrs. Charles, Wilkie Collins, De Foe, Dickens, Disraeli, Dumas, A. J. Evans, George Eliot, Mrs. Gray, Miss Edgworth, Mrs. Gaskell, Mrs. Gore, Griffin, Mrs. Holmes, Mrs. Haven, V. Hugo, Mrs. Hawes, Mrs. Hentz, Hughes, Jas. Kennedy, Kingsley, Kingston, Lever, Lover, De Mille, Maryatt, Mrs. Marsh, Melville, Ouida, Mrs. Muloch, C. Reade, Mayne Reid, Mrs. Peebles, Paulding, Roe, Scott, Mrs. Sedgwick, Mrs. H. B. Stowe, A. S. Stephens, Mrs. Sherwood, Simms, Miss Sinclair, Smollett, Mrs. Southworth, Sue, Thackeray, D. P. Thompson, Trollope, Yates, Young, Warren, Mrs. H. Wood and Mrs. Whitney,

The works on architecture are very numerous, including Drawings from Ancient Temples, Brandon's Open Timber Roofs of the Middle Ages, Berry's Remains of Ecclesiastical Woodwork, Sir W. Dugdale's great work, "Monasticon Anglicanum," Fergusson's Rock Cut Temples of India, Instrumenta Ecclesiastica, Nash's Mansions of England in the Olden Time, many of Pugin's most celebrated works, Ruskin's publications, Rutter's Fonthill, Turner's Domestic Architecture in England of the Middle Ages, Weale's Designs, and Will's Ancient English Ecclesiastical Architecture.

The collection of general biographical works is quite complete, besides which there are over six hundred separate biographical narratives. In ecclesiastical history there is a large and varied assortment of works, and theology is well represented. The works pertaining to ecclsiology are also numerous. Confessedly religious works also have a place, and among them are treatises on the whole or parts of the Bible, essays on Christianity, and on the different phases of Christian life.

The library also contains numerous works relating to the continents of the world and their several divisions, and the history of each, more especially works pertaining to North and South America and to the provinces of the latter, and especially to the subdivisions of the former, including particular accounts of each one of the United States, and of many of the counties, cities and towns therein ; also works concerning Canada and other portions of British America.

There are also to be found documents pertaining to the Congress of the United States, the State papers of this country, the proceedings of the national Congress and of the Legislature of the State of New York ; a large collection of works on the War of the Revolution, the War of 1812, and the War of the Rebellion of 1861, besides treatises, essays and discussions on agriculture, British husbandry, farming, gardening, rural and domestic economy, cottage building, amusements, festivals, games, anatomy, ancient and modern history, commerce, angling, church architecture and ecclesiastical furniture, animal and vegetable philosophy, antiquities, carpentry, masonry, naval architecture, timber, ventilation, astronomy, chemistry, botany, domestic architecture, education, electricity, mythology, engineering, English history and language, philology, entomology, genealogy, geography, science, grammar, geometry, heraldry, intellectual science, law, literature, medicine, mathematics, physical geography,

geology, manufactures, discoveries, patents, inventions, bibliography, mechanics, meteorology, mineralogy, music, natural history, painting, phrenology, physical science, physiology, poetry, the drama, political science, political economy, landscape gardening, horticulture, rhetoric, slavery, hunting, fishing, theology, topography, travel, spectrum analysis, synonyms, and other subjects which are are classified as scientific, artistic or mechanical.

Of course, the foregoing is but an imperfect presentation of the wealth of learning and of the fruits of centuries of study which are stored on the shelves of the rooms of the Troy Young Men's Association. Ordinary books are easily accessible to almost any one, but here alone in this city are to be found the well-springs and fountain-sources of certain departments of learning from which he who wishes to partake can partake, at a yearly cost which is less than the amount which many a young man squanders in a week on his follies or extravagances.

FOURTH PAPER.

One portion of the Library of the Troy Young Men's Association should, in this connection, receive special mention. We refer to the Yourt Alcove. The history of this department is not, perhaps, fully known. When in the possession of his health and mental faculties, William R. Yourt, while preparing his will and arranging for the final disposition of his property, determined to leave a large sum of money to be expended on a monument in his memory to be raised in Oakwood Cemetery. He subsequently changed his views, however, on this subject, doubtless feeling that it was unwise to expend a sum of money so large, in the barren form of a memorial marble, to be placed far away from human companionships, and to take from the intelligent uses of the earth what might be otherwise employed for the benefit of living men. Turning his attention to the Association, he determined to do something for the generations that should come after him, and to devote a part of the sum originally intended for a monument to the formation of a collection of books in the rooms of the Young Men's Association, and also to making provision for the annual increase of such collection. His first idea was to provide for the purchase of books pertaining to the history of Ireland and Scotland alone, but having become convinced that this restriction would be more narrow than useful, he abandoned it, and after his death, which occurred on May 24, 1862, his will was found to contain the following wise and beneficent provision :

"I hereby give and bequeath to the Troy Young Men's Association the sum of (5000) five thousand dollars for the following uses and purposes, viz : Three thousand dollars of said sum shall be expended in the purchase of books, chiefly historical, under the direction of my said executors, and the books so purchased shall be kept in a separate alcove in the library room of said Association, to be designated by my surname, and a suitable inscription shall be placed in each book ;—and the remaining two thousand dollars of said sum shall be invested by said Association, so long as the same may be, lawfully, and its income applied in maintaining and adding to such alcove and its contents ; and in case such investment shall be or become unlawful, then the said sum of two thousand dollars shall also at once be expended in the purchase of books for such alcove."

The executors named in the will, C. L. Alden and John Yourt, associated with themselves B. H. Hall, "whose experience," says one writer, "in the selection of books was a sufficient guarantee of their value, and in a few months nearly two thousand volumes were placed upon the shelves of the Yourt alcove." Over this alcove is inscribed the name "Yourt," and on the inside of the front cover of each book bought with the money from this bequest is inserted the extract from his will above given, printed on a label. Future generations will cherish the memory of this thoughtful citizen, who devoted a part of his property to the spread of intelligence and for the benefit of his race, and the monument of the books among the living, while it exerts its silent influence on the minds of men, will serve as a better, purer and brighter memorial of the donor than the beautiful granite shaft that rises above his final resting place in yonder necropolis.

But the advantages which are to be derived from the Association are not confined wholly to those which spring from an examination of what may be termed books in the restricted sense of the term. The reading room affords opportunities for obtaining the latest intelligence in the world of literature, science and art, and the most recent lucubrations of the ripest thinkers of the age, on almost all the subjects with which the human intellect of the world is at present engaged. Here also one can peruse many of the serial stories of the day, as they appear in the weekly or monthly issues of one magazine or another. Of publications of this nature, which are to be found on the table or files of the Association, twenty-eight are American and thirteen English, making forty-one of the periodical class.

Besides these, the reading room is supplied with thirty-three newspapers, representing the following cities: New York, 11; Springfield, Mass., 1; Chicago, 1; Buffalo, 1; Rochester, 1; Syracuse, 1; Albany, 3; Cincinnati, 2; Boston, 2; Hartford, Conn., 1; San Francisco, 1; Utica, 1; London, England, 1; Troy, 6.

The Debating Society has been an adjunct of the Association since the formation of the latter. From the address of John T. Birge, who is now its president, delivered as introductory to the opening debate of this year, on January 13th, 1877, we learn that "the original question committee consisted of H. Z. Hayner, David L. Seymour, William H. Van Schoonhoven, G. W. Francis and Martin I. Townsend. The first meeting for debate was held in the court house on the evening of January 12, 1835, when the question, 'Ought a representative to be guided by the will of his constituents in opposition to his own judgment,' was discussed and decided in favor of the negative." During its early years and occasionally when questions directly affecting the moral or political status of the community were under consideration, some of the ablest men of which Troy could boast were found in the arena of debate, maintaining with all the enthusiasm which attaches to strong belief and obstinate natures, the opinions which each held on the subject under discussion.

In these contests, forensic eloquence of a high order was often heard. Here in full and resonant tones were poured forth the strictly logical arguments which were so characteristic of the late Dr. Beman, while at the same time they were delivered with an *ex cathedra* air which assumed as a foregone conclusion the utter impossibility of successful contradiction. In a manner more suave and bland, yet with great clearness and precision, the Hon. David L. Seymour would present his views of the matter under consideration, while the graceful oratory of the Rev. Charles H. Read, then a merchant in this city, never failed to crowd the benches with an admiring audience when it was known that his Chrysosemic diction was to be heard in debate on some question of special interest.

At one time the Debating Society did not excite that enthusiasm which its objects should have called forth; but since the year 1860 it has aided many a young man to "find his legs" without feeling them to be useless as supporters, and thereafter to give tongue to thoughts well worthy of being heard and remembered. The privileges of this society are also accorded with membership, and as a training school for the wider arena of the pulpit, the platform or the bar, the opportunities thus afforded are of great and abiding value.

For a small additional cost the advantages of the lecture course are open to members whenever a lecture course is announced. During the last forty years the influence of courses of lectures has shared with the press and the pulpit the responsibility of forming and stimulating public thought and action. For the last few years this potential motor has, owing to various causes, more particularly the hard times, been kept in abeyance. But with a revival of business there is no reason why the educative force that dwells in the platform of the lecture room should not again be placed in motion, with the happiest results. Even now we are of opinion that a lecture course might be organized for the coming winter which would not only command some of the best ability of this country, but which would also aid in brightening the present material condition of the Association.

We have not spoken of the basis for an art gallery owned by this institution, because there does not seem any chance, at present, that an advance can be made in this direction. Still the Association is the owner of several works of art, among which are paintings from the brush of such men as Gifford, Durand, Dix,

Kensett, Eastman Johnson, McEntee, William Hart and Boutelle, a marble of Launt Thompson, and a fine bronze statuette of Abraham Lincoln, the gift of George M. Tibbits. This work of art was obtained by Mr. Tibbits while in Munich in 1867. It is a reduced copy of the statue cast for the city of Chicago, and is about two feet eleven inches high.

In aggregating the advantages which the Troy Young Men's Association presents to its patrons the following facts are here combined.

The number of books, exclusive of newspapers, is.....	22,181
The volumes of bound newspapers are.....	961

The unbound volumes of newspapers are as follows :

The New York <i>Herald</i> from December, 1848 to December, 1877, 30 years' volumes.....	60
The New York <i>Tribune</i> from January, 1848 to January, 1878, 30 years' volumes.....	60
The New York <i>Commercial Advertiser</i> from 1866 to 1878, 12 years' volumes.....	24
Making a total of volumes.....	23,286

Of the books proper, above enumerated, 19,950 are described in printed catalogues, and 2,231 are registered on manuscript lists. The catalogue proper of the library was issued in 1859, and forms an octavo volume of 232 pages. The first supplementary catalogue was issued in 1866, in 112 pages, and the second supplementary catalogue was printed in 1871, and embraces 68 pages.

One point made by the Association is to preserve our local history and the history of the State. With this end in view, the Association causes to be bound, yearly, the *Troy Daily Times*, the *Troy Morning Whig*, the *Troy Daily Press*, the *Northern Budget*, the *Observer* and the *Trojan*; also the *Albany Evening Journal*, the *Albany Argus* and the *New York Times*. As is stated above, the *New York Herald*, the *New York Tribune* and the *New York Commercial Advertiser* are preserved, but the funds of the Association have not been adequate to the expense of binding them, nor is its space sufficiently ample to accommodate the bound volumes they would make, in any proper compartment. The great advantage of the preservation of these newspapers cannot be over-estimated. To any citizen who is proud of the fair fame of our city and anxious to preserve it, the fact that the Association possesses such an immense amount of newspaper literature which is now mainly bestowed in corners and garret rooms, should be a sufficient argument to induce him to do what he can to preserve these accumulations of historical matter, and to place them in accessible positions.

Besides the library and the reading room with its newspapers and periodicals, the Association, as has been already stated, affords the advantages of a Debating Society, and at a small additional cost, a lecture course, when lectures are provided. The present needs of the Association remain now to be considered. These are not of a magnitude sufficient to discourage effort. They are such as should be met by the intelligence of the individual members of a community, in the midst of which this Association has for years occupied an elevated position, and from which influences the most beneficial have gone forth to enlighten and adorn.

FIFTH PAPER.

In common with other organizations that are not endowed, and which depend mainly upon the patronage of the public for their successful and beneficial continuance, the Young Men's Association has suffered during the last few years of business depression and financial disaster. To meet the changed conditions of society and to establish a different and a more economic administration of affairs, its expenses have been reduced to the lowest point of possible existence, and yet the income has not been and is not now sufficient to meet the payments which must be made if the doors of the Association are to be kept open and the tables and files are to be covered with periodicals and newspapers. For the purpose of exhibiting the expenditures of the Association, and instituting a comparison between the present rate of disbursements and the rate of the recent past, we append the following table :

	1874.	1875.	1876.	1877.
Librarian.....	\$2000 00	\$1138 54	\$900 00	\$900 00
Rent.....	1000 00	10 0 00	1000 00	1000 00
Gas.....	282 05	217 52	214 50	243 60
Insurance.....	270 00	362 00	275 '0	138 00
Advertising and printing.....	261 47	97 23	11 20	12 75
Binding.....	150 00	272 62	102 27	390 00
Newspapers.....	343 51	529 36	451 98	392 33
Sundries.....	180 62	221 62	206 79	137 61
Elcction.....	10 00	8 34
Coal.....	75 00	75 00
Postoffice.....	38 02	12 04	13 55
Interest.....	18 08	24 30	57 39	105 13
Debating Society.....	23 40	26 60
	<u>\$4602 15</u>	<u>\$4004 37</u>	<u>\$3219 04</u>	<u>\$2946 87</u>

In this statement no mention is made of the purchase of books, as most of the books bought during the period covered have been purchased by the proceeds of funds designated for that purpose, and the aggregate of purchases of books for said four years to this time amounts only to \$707.22. Some of the bills contracted in 1874 and 1875 were not paid until 1876, but in the above statement these bills have been placed under the year in which they were respectively contracted.

During the present year, by paying for magazines in advance, the Association has saved \$20.60 over the prices paid in 1875, and \$12.20 over the prices paid in 1876. In 1875 the price of ten New York city daily papers for that year was \$144.20, but for the last two years they have been received through the mail at a cost of \$93.30 annually, yielding a saving of \$50.90. Other newspapers have been obtained at a reduced rate, and on them the saving for this year has been \$14.80, making the total saving on newspapers for this year \$65.70. It ought also to be stated that the subscriptions for the newspapers have been paid to May 1, 1878, and of the magazines to January 1, 1878. The Troy newspapers are all placed on the files of the Association by the courtesy of their respective proprietors. The statement of money paid for insurance as made in the above list does not represent the total disbursement on that account for this year, but on this item there will be a saving of \$50. The insurance expires Dec. 31, 1877.

Irrespective of the income received from the few funds which the Association has, the income from the sale of membership tickets for the four years above designated was as follows: 1874, \$3,308; 1875, \$2,376.50; 1876, \$1,429.50; 1877, \$1,607.25. A lecture course was attempted in 1874 and 1875 which resulted in a loss. Dr. Lord's lecture course in 1876 yielded \$193.50. There have been no lectures this year. The Debating Society has been conducted with vigor and interest, and has been a means of benefit to those who have availed themselves of its opportunities, but as is well known, no income is expected or received from this department of the Association. The indebtedness of the Association at the close of the year 1875 was \$2,428.32. This sum was carried forward into the next year, and at the close of the year 1876 the total indebtedness was \$2,016.56. With this burden of debt the present year began. During 1877 the Association has, as has already been stated, paid for their newspapers for six months in advance, and have also been obliged to carry their debt on interest, which interest amounts to over \$100. The figures for 1877, as given in the table above, are in a measure estimated, but from the best data that can now be obtained, the end of the present fiscal year will find the Association indebted as follows:

For borrowed money.....	\$1,800
For balance due the Yount alcove fund.....	153
For balance due the Selden Art fund.....	250
	<u>\$2,203</u>
Less balance to be received from the Selden life membership fund.....	110
Making a total indebtedness of.....	<u>\$2,098</u>

In the papers relating to the Association which have appeared in the *Troy Daily Times* during this week, and of which this is the last, an attempt has been made to trace the development and growth of a taste for literature, science and art in this community. It has been shown that in former generations there were educated men in the nascent village, who inaugurated the old Troy Library

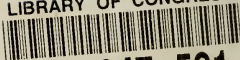
for the purpose of affording to their fellow villagers the advantages to be derived from the perusal of good books, and it has also been shown that from the presses of the early booksellers of the same village emanated works of a high order in letters, science, travel and education. Stress, too, has been laid on the educative force which was developed by the Troy Lyceum, and by the teachings and lectures of Prof. Amos Eaton. Following these influences as a resultant effect, we have seen the Troy Young Men's Association coming into life as a new source of power in the realms of education, and we have traced its growth until we find it embarrassed with its riches, and, while possessed of inexhaustible mines of wealth, yet having but few to value its splendor and not many inclined to enjoy the hidden treasures which would willingly shine forth to delight the eye of the diligent seeker. Permanent and continuous life may be assured to the Association by a large yearly membership. The price of such membership for a year is only THREE DOLLARS. Article two of the constitution, adopted in December last, is in these words:

ARTICLE 2.—*Membership*: Any person may become a regular member of the Association for the period of an Association year on paying to the treasurer the sum of \$3, and shall thereby become entitled to all the privileges of the Association, except as limited by this constitution, and excepting attendance on any lecture or lectures that may be delivered before the Association. But such person shall not be entitled to vote at any annual election of officers unless he shall have made such payment to the treasurer, or in his absence, to the librarian, before the hour of 12 o'clock a. m. of the day preceding such election.

Provision is also made for special membership at a less sum for those who may join for any portion of an Association year less than the whole, and also for life membership which may be secured on payment of \$50. The year of the Association extends from 9 o'clock of the morning of the first day of December, till 9 o'clock of the morning of the first day of December next succeeding.

The annual meeting of the members of the Association is held on the Monday next preceding the second Tuesday of December in each year. This year the annual meeting will occur on the 10th day of December. The annual election will take place on the 11th of December, which is the second Tuesday of that month. For the purpose of enabling the Association to be self-sustaining during the next Association year, let every person who is now a member renew his ticket on or before the first of December next, and *bring with him one new member*. By this course, the Association will be sustained for another year. It is possible to pay the ordinary annual running expenses with the sum of \$3,200. The income from the sale of members' tickets last year was \$1,607.26. Double this last sum by the course proposed, and the result is the sum of \$3,214.52.

But even should this be done for the future, there still remains for the present, a legacy of the past amounting to \$2,098, which must be cancelled on or before the 1st day of December next. We do not know by what means the young men to whose intelligent care the affairs of the Association are at present confided will endeavor to meet this obligation, but whatever course they may resolve to pursue in their meritorious work, we bespeak for them from our liberal, high-minded and patriotic citizens hearty and effective co-operation. We appeal to our liberal citizens, because it is from them we have been taught to expect the doing of those good deeds which in their reflex effect bestow a blessing on him who performs them, while at the same time they confer a direct benefit on him for whose benefit they are done. We appeal as well to our high-minded citizens, for it is in their cultivated minds that we are to seek a due appreciation of the stores of learning, historical research, art, literature and science which are to be found within the valued precincts of the Association. And last and brightest of all, we make our appeal to our patriotic citizens. The love of country, next to the love of God and of one's own kindred, is the highest duty which every man owes as a member of the brotherhood of man. True patriotism manifests its highest characteristic in care for the growth and development in mental, moral and social well-being of that portion of the land in which a man happens to live. What citizen of Troy is there who is not interested in the welfare of his municipality and in those organizations within its bounds which have been established for the growth and teaching of the people? If, then, direct application should be made to our citizens for aid to remove the present burden of indebtedness from the Association, let not those who appeal be sent empty away, but let their application be met with a hearty response and a liberal benefaction from every one.



To the Friends of the Troy Young Men's Association :

Since the papers contained in the foregoing pages were first published, the Executive Committee of the Troy Young Men's Association have requested and authorized the following members of said committee to solicit subscriptions for the purpose of cancelling the indebtedness of the Association, namely : William Shaw, William E. Gilbert, William H. Hollister, Jr., and Philip F. Vanderheyden.

These gentlemen have entered upon their labors, have called upon several of the citizens of Troy, have been favorably received in all instances, and have already obtained substantial acknowledgments of the high esteem in which the Association is held by the community. They are now prosecuting, still further, their labors, and hope to accomplish the object which has been entrusted to them for their attention. The kindly regard already accorded them must be looked upon as an earnest of the generous reception that awaits them in the continuance and fulfillment of their labors.

It may not be amiss to add, that the members of the Executive Committee, appreciating the present needs of the library, have within the last few days raised a fund among their own number, and with it have already purchased and placed on the shelves of the Association about 135 volumes of the latest publications, mainly in the realms of fiction. Many of these books are already in the hands of members. This action may be taken as an evidence of the interest which the Executive Committee take in the Association—an interest which they wish to develop and foster in the minds of all.

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LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



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