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UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

**THE CHURCHES OF ALLENTOWN**

**A STUDY IN STATISTICS**

BY

**JAMES HERBERT BOSSARD**

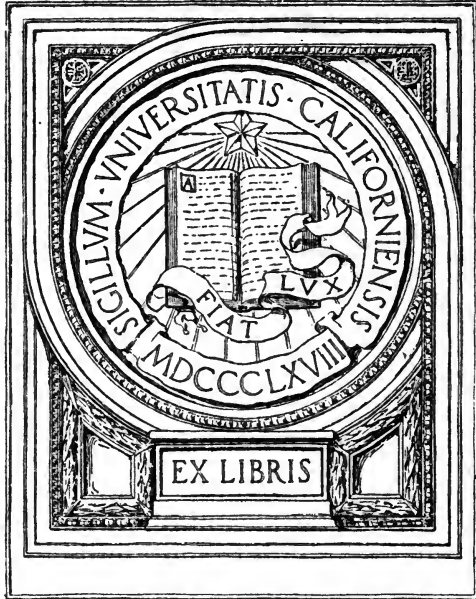
**A THESIS**

**PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL IN  
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

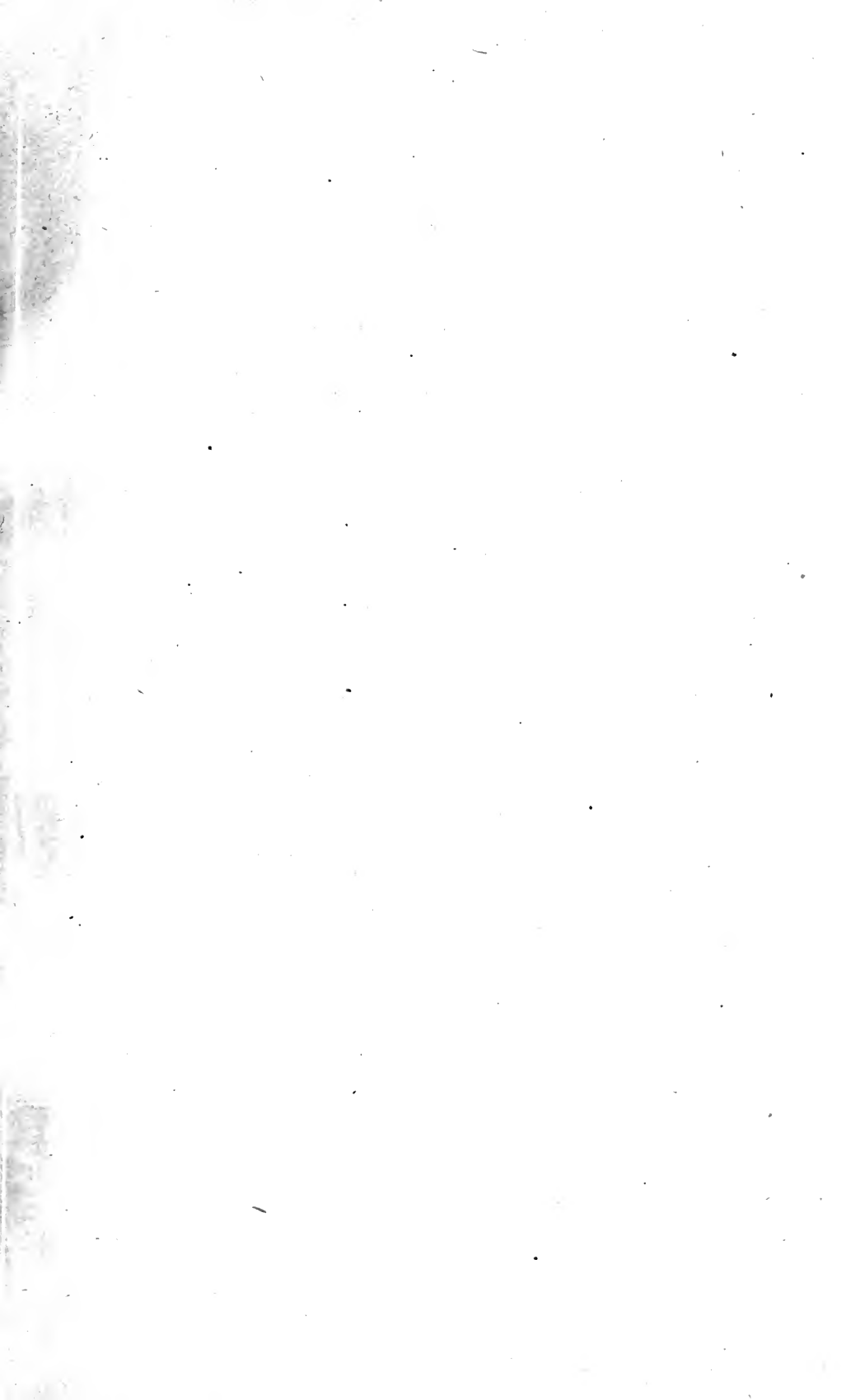
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*To*  
**MY FATHER AND MOTHER**

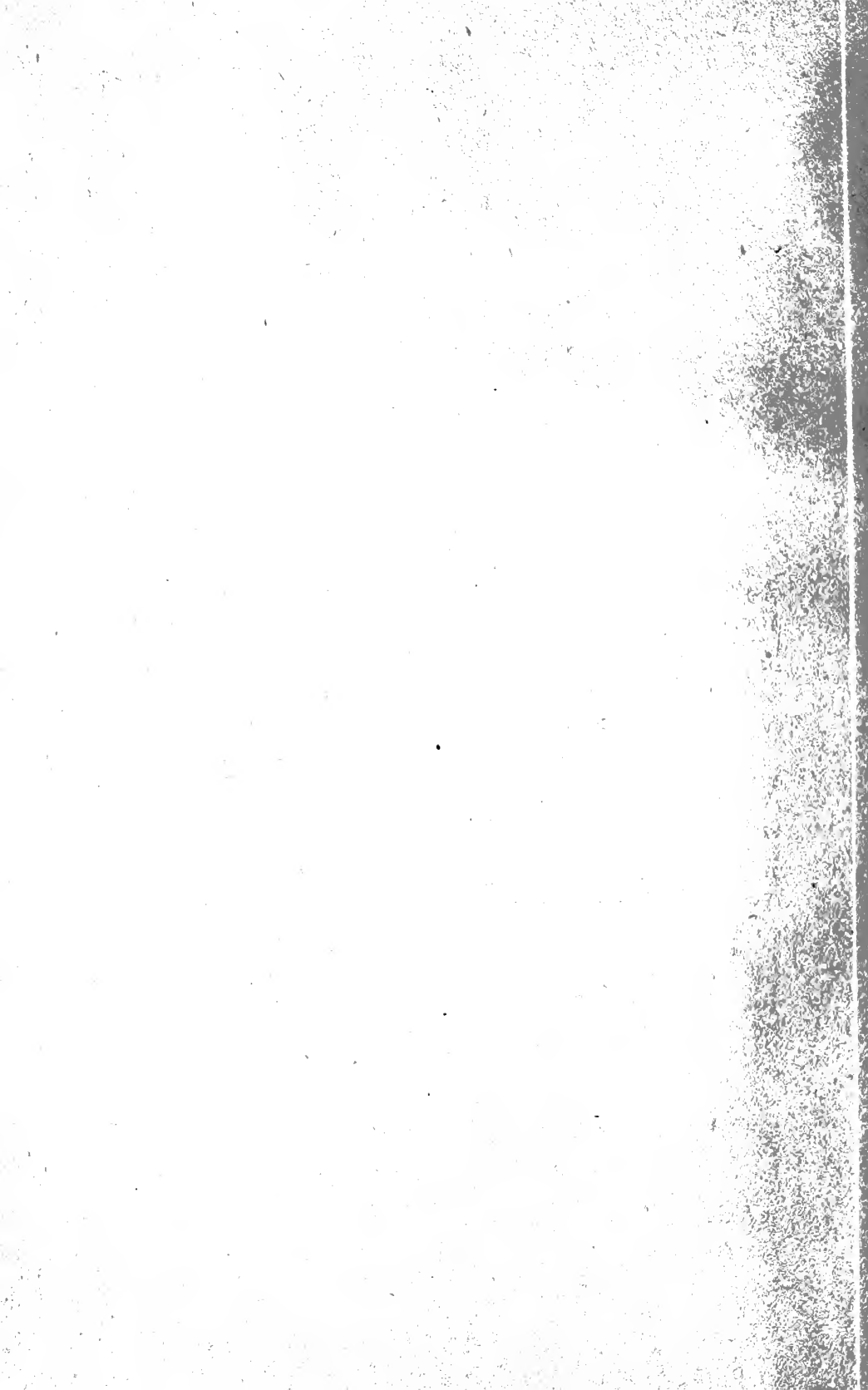
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## CHAPTER I.

### ALLENTOWN: THE CITY AND ITS PEOPLE.

In the extreme eastern portion of the state of Pennsylvania, almost midway between the northern and southern boundaries of the state, lies the city of Allentown. It is situated on the western side of the Lehigh River at the confluence of the Lehigh, Little Lehigh and Jordan Rivers, and some eighteen miles southwest from where the Lehigh flows into the Delaware, at Easton, Penna. It lies 90 miles west of New York City, and about 60 miles north of Philadelphia. It is known as the "Queen City of the Lehigh Valley," being located in the heart of the general section of eastern Pennsylvania known by that name, and claims to be its commercial and industrial metropolis.

#### A Brief Historical Survey.

Judged by the standard of American municipal longevity, Allentown is an old city. It was laid out in 1762 at the direction of Chief Justice William Allen, who then owned all of the land now covered by the city. The name Northampton was given to the village, which, at the end of the first year, embraced 13 families. Its growth, like that of most colonial villages, was slow. At the outbreak of the Revolution, there were 54 families residing within its confines. The first federal census in 1790 revealed a population of 486. The United States Gazetteer, in 1795, describes Allentown in the following words: "A handsome and flourishing town pleasantly situated on the point of land which is formed by the junction of Jordan Creek and the Little Lehigh. It is regularly laid out, and contains about ninety dwellings, a German Lutheran and Calvinist church, an academy, and three merchant mills." By 1810, the population had increased to 710, and the following year, the town was incorporated as a borough. The name Northampton was retained until 1838 when it was changed to Allentown in honor of the founder of the city.

The first half of the 19th century was a period of intense interest in transportation, of internal improvements and of intellectual development, all over the United States. Allentown shared, in its own small way, in these movements of the age. Between 1812 and 1837, a half dozen stage coaches served as connecting links between Allentown and such places as Philadelphia, Easton, Reading, Wilkes-Barre and other distant places. Two transportation companies did business in the little town. Warehouses were located at the river front at which the canal boats, coming down the canal which the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company had completed as far as Easton by 1838, stopped to unload their wares. By the end of the first half of the 19th century, five fire companies had been organized. In 1827, the Northampton Water Company was established and pumping works were speedily erected and a reservoir constructed. Bridges were built to span the neighboring rivers and creeks. A bank was opened in 1814 and this enjoyed a successful and prosperous career for a time, failing however in 1842. Streets and alleys were ordered surveyed in 1812 and "regulated, and laid out according to the original plan," and all articles deemed public nuisances were to be removed. Six local newspapers sprang up during this period to enlighten the borough citizenship. An English school was opened on South Seventh street in 1813. A school for girls was opened in the same year, and from 1813 to 1845, night schools were kept by various teachers. Other schools were opened and the public school movement grew in keeping with its general development throughout the state.<sup>1</sup>

Population during this fifty year period grew slowly but steadily. From 710 in 1810, it climbed to 1,757 in 1830 and the middle of the century saw it reach 3,703. Near the close of the third decade of the century, Anne Royall, a writer, of Washington, D. C., visited the town and spoke of it as follows: "Allentown is a handsome town on the Lehigh. It stands upon an elevated site, surrounded on all sides by a vale. This, again, is surrounded by mountains and hills, forming a romantic and picturesque appearance. It appears to be a flourishing town

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<sup>1</sup> Summarized from "Anniversary History of Lehigh County," Vol. 1.

and does much business.”<sup>2</sup> This perhaps is the most fitting summary to make of the town’s development during this first half of the 19th century. It was picturesque, it was flourishing, it did business, it grew, giving full promise that it refused to remain a straggling village.

The decade 1850 to 1860 was one of unusual growth. The population jumped from 3,703 to 8,025. Two of the main factors responsible for this growth were the opening up of the Lehigh Valley and East Pennsylvania railroads, and the establishment of the iron works of the Allentown Iron Company. The railroads especially advanced the material interests of the town. By the end of the decade, there were 57 manufactories in Allentown: 2 foundry and machine shops, 7 agricultural implement manufacturers, 6 establishments connected in some way with iron and steel industry, 5 grist mills, 6 breweries or distilleries, 8 brick yards, 5 carriage manufacturers and 18 other manufacturing projects scattered over an extended field.<sup>3</sup> The Allentown Democrat, describing the various aspects of this growth, said in 1859:

“There have been so many changes, physically and socially in Allentown, as a town, within a few years past, that a former resident, who returns to it after a short absence, can scarcely recognize the place or its people. Quite recently one of this class remarked to us: ‘I came here to spend some time amid the scenery and acquaintances of former days, but I am hardly able to discover a vestige of that scenery, or to find an acquaintance once in an hour. Everything has changed.’ And that man had been absent but about seven years. By the census of 1850, the population of Allentown was 3,703. \* \* Now our population is estimated at 10,000, and the original borough plat has increased in area east and west, at least a quarter of a mile. In building operations we have progressed remarkably—in 1855, 108 buildings were erected; in 1856, 138; in 1857, 169; in 1858, 62, making a total of 467 buildings in four years. Handsome three and four story brick and iron front edifices cover the site of many an old weatherboard shell of his day: stores of a hundred feet in depth have succeeded the pent-up dingy shops his eyes were accustomed to look upon; and the din of busy life prevails everywhere in lieu of the sweet calm then so grateful to him in taking his after dinner nap. If he should go to where he considered himself ‘in the country,’ planing mills, grist-mills, saw-mills, machine shops, foundries and furnaces, depots, with long trains of cars stretching either way, and dwellings innumerable would greet his eyes, and the noise of railway trains astir his ears. At the dawn of the year 1855, Allentown had no railway outlet, now it has two—the Lehigh Valley Railroad connecting us with the principal emporiums of the Union, while the East Pennsylvania road links us with the far West and South by the shortest route in existence. Besides these, we have the Allentown and

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 445.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 443. (Summarized.)

Auburn road in process of construction. Stage coaches are almost among the things past—a few months more will put them entirely so. Instead of consuming twelve and fifteen hours in travelling to Philadelphia, we now go there, spend about three hours, and return to our homes, all between the rising and setting of the sun.”

In 1867, Allentown was incorporated as a city. It then had an area of 3.14 square miles, or 2,011.27 acres. Three years afterwards, the census of 1870 revealed a population of 13,884.

In the seventh decade of the last century, with the date of incorporation as the best arbitrary point of departure, there began in Allentown that epoch of numerical growth, of industrial development, and commercial centralization, which, sweeping all over the north and east of the United States, transformed sleepy hamlets and bustling little towns into teeming and prosperous centers of nervous strenuousity.

As far as Allentown is concerned, in this period then from 1867 to 1900, there were four main industrial lines in the background of the city's material development.

First, there is the development of the iron and steel industry. In 1867 there were five small iron and steel industries in the city. Thirty-three years later, there were six more of appreciable size, and four of the five antedating the corporation of the city had been appreciably extended. The most important of the newer industries was a plant established by the American Steel and Wire Company, a subsidiary plant of the United States Steel Corporation. The plant was devoted to the manufacture of wire products. Throughout its entire history, this establishment has been closely identified with the commercial and industrial history of the city, both because of the large number of men employed, and by virtue of its remarkable record of continuous operation. Twelve foundries and machine shops sprang into being during this period, manufacturing steam and gasoline engines, brass and iron castings, hardware iron and brass tubes and fittings, knitting machinery and refrigerator trimmings. Virtually all of these industries have prospered, giving steady employment and relatively substantial remuneration to a large number of employees.

Second, the wood working industries enjoyed an appreciable growth. Carriage making was one of the earliest industries in the city. Three carriage making estab-

lishments were in existence by 1867, and three more were added by the close of the century. All of them enjoyed a good, steady trade, the prosperous farming section lying on all sides of the city furnishing a good market.

In 1870, the making of furniture was begun by Henry Berkemeyer. Within twenty-five years, seven furniture factories sprang up. Of these, the Yeager Furniture Company has come to enjoy a rather wide reputation for artistic productions.

Five planing mills were located in Allentown between 1865 and 1890. These extended the demand for skilled workers. These mills fill the demands of the local market, and sell, to some extent, to the local markets of eastern Pennsylvania.

Third, there is the manufacture of boots and shoes. In 1860, "the manner of dress was different from that of today. Men all wore boots. Children, four or five years old, who were the pride of the family, were not in full dress without a pair of boots. Women wore shoes made of lasting, mostly in colors, like brown and grey. For every day wear ladies wore shoes made out of extra heavy kip and calf, that had nearly all hand-pegged bottoms. \* \* \* The fine Sunday boots were made out of domestic calf and French calf, and were handsewed and pegged." <sup>4</sup> In 1865, when H. Leh and Company, the pioneer shoe manufacturers of the city, began manufacturing by machine, "there was no factory in Pennsylvania outside of Philadelphia, and none from here to Cincinnati." The project of shoe manufacturing developed rapidly in the city after the initial advent of Mr. Leh, and by 1900, there were seven boot and shoe factories in the city, supplying rather more than a local market, and furnishing employment for a large number of people, including a number of women and girls.

Fourth, of the bases of the city's industrial development during the period under consideration, is that entire group of industries known as the textiles. Later statements may be forecast here with the remark that Allentown is today the leading textile manufacturing city in the state, outside of Philadelphia. Between 1880 and 1900, some ten textile industries were located here.

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<sup>4</sup> Quoted from a paper read by H. Leh at Pennsylvania State Shoe Manufacturers Ass'n meeting in 1900.

Among them was the Adelaide Silk Mill, "which was the pioneer silk mill in Pennsylvania." Its formal opening in 1881 was made a great social occasion. Special trains ran into the town, Mayors, State Senators, metropolitan bankers, Congressmen, and heads of large business enterprises from a widely extended territory, were present to share in the formal exercises connected with its opening.

Hon. E. G. Martin, Mayor of the city, closed his dedicatory address with these words: "We now dedicate this building to the industry of silk manufacture, with the hope that it may prove to be the nucleus of a great and extensive enterprise in the Lehigh Valley."<sup>5</sup> This hope was rapidly realized, for not only the Adelaide, but the entire group of silk and textile industries grew rapidly.

One result of this development was the extensive employment of women and children. It will, of course, be remembered that there was virtually no labor legislation in Pennsylvania, limiting or restricting the employment of these groups, before the close of the first decade of the twentieth century. Older residents are unanimous in the declaration that entrance into the mills involved, in the closing decades of the 19th century, no social degradation, and that daughters of some of the best families, so called, entered this field of employment. The situation in fact seems to have rivalled that which existed around the middle of the century in the New England states, when the girls of the family worked in the mills while the boys went to Yale and Harvard, and school teachers supplemented their faulty salaries by taking a summer turn in the factory. The writer recalls how, as a boy at the close of the last century, he wrestled with the invitation of the "Small Boys Wanted Here" sign which adorned the doorways and outside walls of these mills, weighing their call, with the promise of ready cash, against the parental mandate to continue a school career. Such signs, together with such as "Girls Wanted," "Women Wanted," and "Young Children Wanted," were for almost three decades familiar sights, staring passersby in the face day after day.

This situation reacted directly upon the growth of population. The thrifty German farmers from the surrounding country, influenced by the city-ward tendency of the

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<sup>5</sup> "Anniversary History." Vol. 1, p. 1058.



time, were considerably attracted by the opportunities which the mills afforded. While the head of the family worked in the various establishments in and about the city, the women and children of the household could contribute their share to the family income. Many an older family today owns its own home as a result of this earlier prosperity, when every member of the family practically was in receipt of a pay envelope. It will be pointed out later on in this chapter how extensive this influx from the surrounding country really has been.

In addition to these four lines of industrial development, there was growth along many other lines. This survey is not meant to be exhaustive, but simply to suggest the main channels of the economic growth during the period.

There remain to be noted two other industries, not in the city, but sufficiently nearby to react profoundly upon the life and growth of the city.

One of these is the cement industry. "Natural cement was used in the United States as early as 1818. In the construction of the Lehigh Canal it was manufactured at Lehigh Gap, from 1826 to 1830, and at Siegfried, from 1830 to 1841."<sup>6</sup> Both of these places are less than a score of miles from Allentown to the north. Nothing much was done in regard to developing the industry at this early period, and it was not until excavations made by the Lehigh Valley Railroad Company along the west bank of the Lehigh River laid bare an extensive formation of cement rock near Coplay, that the real history of this industry begins in this section. In 1866, the Coplay Cement Company was formed. Coplay is perhaps ten miles north of Allentown. This company started in a small way, but found its business profitable, and soon enlarged its plant. In 1873, the company began manufacturing "Portland cement" made by a newly discovered process. This new product became popular and was soon in great demand, being recognized as the equal of the best foreign brands. By 1890, this one plant was producing at the rate of 350,000 barrels a year, being now used extensively in the construction of government works.

Meanwhile, the American Portland Cement Company was organized. Four hundred acres were purchased, and

<sup>6</sup> "Anniversary History." Vol. 1, p. 1065.

a plant erected which was sold in 1898 at a cost of three million dollars. The four large mills which comprised it had a combined capacity of 1,800,000 barrels a year. The plant is located at Egypt, a few miles to the north of Allentown.

In 1897, the Lehigh Portland Cement Company was organized, and a plant erected one mile west of Egypt. This plant has an inexhaustible deposit of cement rock, and today owns eleven mills, which have an annual capacity of 12,000,000 barrels.

According to the figures furnished by the United States Geological Survey, the last decade of the 19th century saw from one-half to three-fourths of the cement production of the United States furnished by the Lehigh District, which includes eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

The development of this industry meant much to Allentown. A large part of the capital invested in these cement plants is Allentown capital. Around these mills, new towns sprang up, and old ones boomed. These towns have been, and are, dependent upon Allentown for many articles of consumption. Moreover, the trolley system of the town, financed in many cases by the same capitalists that financed the cement mills, speedily extended their system to include these cement towns. The railroads began running special trains morning and evening directly to the plants. As a result of these means of quick and cheap transportation, many of the employees began to prefer living in Allentown, away from the cement dust, and where greater home conveniences were possible. The writer recalls how as a boy in the late nineties, living in a small village some fifteen miles from Allentown, a current topic for discussion among many wage earners was the combination of advantages which resulted from moving to the city, i. e. Allentown. One could become a city dweller, be sure of work in the rapidly growing cement mills nearby, transportation to them was easy and cheap, and the mills in the city itself gave the opportunity of employment to the women and children of the household.

The other industry near to the city, which became a causative factor in its growth, was the Bethlehem Steel plant. At the beginning of the year 1857 the project of

building iron works at Bethlehem, Pa., was inaugurated by residents of that vicinity. That same year, the Saucona Iron Company was chartered. This name was speedily changed to another, and then another, and finally in 1899, the "Bethlehem Steel Company" was incorporated. More recently, the Bethlehem Steel Corporation has been formed, but the plant at Bethlehem, which concerns us here, does business under the name of the subsidiary company of the Bethlehem Steel Company.

This plant grew rapidly from the very beginning. Its presiding genius, the world-famous John Fritz, was a large factor in its rapid growth. Early in the 70's, the then recent invention of the Bessemer process of making steel was taken up, and the first steel was rolled in 1873. In 1886, it was decided to build an armor plate works, and during the following years, contracts were taken from the United States Government for armor plate and gun forgings.

The plant at South Bethlehem today covers more than 2,100 acres. It manufactures articles which cover the whole range of iron and steel products. In 1910, more than 10,000 men were employed there. By the beginning of the year 1916, the number exceeded 17,000. One year later, the number was considerably in excess of 20,000. The gigantic war orders growing out of the European struggle have reacted most favorably upon the prosperity of the plant. The Bethlehem Steel Company in the summer of 1917 had orders from the federal government aggregating more than \$500,000,000. The high wages paid and the opportunities for employment served to attract men and women from an extensive territory. A part of this labor force has, of course, been attracted from Allentown, which is but a thirty-minute trolley ride from the plant. A large majority of the influx of laborers from other sections to this plant during the last several years has been compelled to live in Allentown because of the utter lack of housing facilities in the Bethlehems. The housing situation in Allentown, as a result, has been acute for several years.

In fact, the influence of the proximity of this busy \$75,000,000 steel plant to Allentown, has been and is, great. It has contributed much to the city's prosperity, it has contributed to the city's population. It has brought

many people of non-German stock into both the city itself and the surrounding region. It has brought a number of homeless men into the city, meaning men who are living away from their families. It has given Allentown a rooming problem, it has raised a moral and religious problem. In fact, it is difficult to find any aspect of the municipal life which has not been effected, particularly during the past three years.

#### Allentown In the Twentieth Century.

The population of Allentown in 1890 was 25,228. In 1900, it had risen to 35,416, a gain for the decade of 40.4 per cent. Ten years later, in 1910, the federal census gives a population for the city of 51,913, or a gain of 46.6 per cent over 1900. The population in the spring of 1917, the time of this study, is not known. But there are several figures for that particular time which permit a fairly accurate approximation. The estimates of the federal census department, made for the purposes of military conscription, put Allentown's population at 80,526. The city directory, completed in the spring of the year, contains a few more than 70,000 names. Most Allentonians, well informed on the subject of the city's growth, feel that the federal estimate is too high. On the other hand, frequent use of the city directory, such as the writer has been compelled to make and has been a witness to in a newspaper office, proves conclusively that many names are omitted. It has seemed fair therefore to take a figure half-way between the two, or 75,000. An estimate of 75,684 would mean that the city's population had multiplied by three since 1890. Approximately, it is believed that this is correct. The consent of a number of well-informed citizens approves of this general statement.

The period since 1890 very naturally forms a distinct epoch in the life of the city, a period during which an inland town of about 25,000 trebled its population, and grew into an industrial and commercial beehive, rapidly approaching in size and economic importance what in this state is called a second class city.

The rate of growth in population is a barometer of what has taken place in the business and industrial life of the city. In this twenty-seven year period, existing industries have been expanded, and new ones have been

added. Especially did the textile industries boom and grow in numbers. From 1900 to 1914, about 25 new textile establishments were located in the city.

The Federal census, in discussing the economic status of Allentown in and up to 1910, speaks as follows: "After Philadelphia, Allentown is the most important city of the state in the manufacture of textiles. The textile industries, including the dyeing and finishing of textiles, are the most important in the city, having a combined output valued at \$9,838,000, or 37.5 per cent of the total for all industries of the city for 1909. The manufacture of silk and silk goods is the leading branch of the textile industry in this city and increased in value of output from \$3,468,000 in 1889 to \$7,456,000 in 1909. The metal-working industries reported products valued at nearly \$7,000,000; the boot and shoe industry, products valued at \$1,302,000; and tobacco manufactures, products valued at \$1,446,000."<sup>7</sup>

Elsewhere, the census says: "Allentown ranked as the ninth city in the state in 1909 and 1904 and tenth in 1899 in the value of its manufactured products."<sup>8</sup>

Allentown is a prosperous city. Of this there can be no doubt. The whole appearance of the city reflects it. In 1916, there were 17,422 buildings in the city. More than 99 per cent are of brick, stone and cement. Nearly one-half of the families of the city own their own homes. The assessed valuation of the city's real estate in 1916 was over \$61,000,000. The market value of real estate owned by individuals and corporations in that year was over \$100,000,000. There are 1,250 mercantile establishments. These, as well as the city as a whole, profit by the fact that within a radius of six miles, there is a population of around 200,000. For this population, Allentown is the shopping, business and banking center.

Bringing this large population into intimate contact with the city is the fine trolley system of which Allentown is the center. This system extends northward to Slatington, eastward to Delaware Water Gap, westward to Reading, and southward to Philadelphia. With these arteries of trade, plus the feeding by three railroad sys-

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<sup>7</sup> Thirteenth Census of the United States, Abstract, 1910. p. 712.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

tems, Allentown merchants are enabled to do business with fully 300,000 people.

**The Nativity and Nationality of Allentown's Population.**

Although Allentown has grown rapidly within recent decades, both as to numbers and industrial importance, she has not done so, like many other American industrial centers, by virtue of any unusual influx of the foreign born. According to the census of 1910, 74 per cent of the city's population were native born of native parents, 13.8 per cent were native born of foreign or mixed parents, and 12 per cent were foreign born. Let us analyze each of these three elements as to national origin, location within the city, etc.

**a. The Foreign Born.**

The foreign born population of Allentown in 1910 numbered 6,234. The number in 1900 was 2,985. The percentage of increase for the decade is 109. As the percentage of increase for the city as a whole during the decade was but 46.6, it appears that the foreign born increased more than twice as rapidly as the population as a whole. Forming 8.4 per cent of the city's population in 1900, they comprised, as has been noted, 12 per cent in 1910.

In regard to the composition by nationality of the foreign born in 1910, the census figures show Austria, Hungary and Germany to have been the three most important contributors, of relative numerical importance in the order named: 24.5 per cent, or one out of four of the foreign born, are Austrian born; 21.8 per cent are Hungarian; and 17.7 per cent are German. Italy, Russia and Ireland follow with 10.6, 8.8 and 6.6 per cent, respectively.

Looking at the foreign born from another standpoint, and including the nationalities of lesser numerical importance, it is found that 67 per cent are of new immigrant stock, and 33 per cent are of old immigrant stock.

Turning to the distribution of the foreign born within the city, one finds a rather complete segregation. If one takes the 1st, 6th, 9th and 10th wards, comprising the eastern and northeastern part of the city, it will be found that 77.5 per cent of the foreign born are located there. Adding the second ward, covering the southern section of the city before annexation of the 14th ward

in 1911, one has a section comprising 84.4 per cent of this entire element.

The area of Allentown, actually built up at the present time, resembles in shape, a rectangle, running east and west. With the exception of the recently annexed 14th ward, the Lehigh River is the eastern boundary of the city. The width of the imperfect rectangle ranges, from the river front to Twelfth street, between fifteen and twenty blocks. West of Twelfth street, the width of the city narrows until, arriving at Twentieth street, which is now the western limit of the built-up part of the city, one finds a width of five blocks.

It is the lower or eastern portion of the city, covering a strip of from four to six blocks in depth and as wide as the city, a section traversed by the railroads and lying next to the Lehigh River, which is the center of the foreign element, and in which, as has been indicated, practically nine out of every ten of the foreigners, live. Almost 39 per cent are in the sixth ward, erstwhile home of the Irish and Germans, and known as "the tough sixth" for many years. But 14 per cent of the entire population in this ward in 1910 was composed of native born stock of native born parents.

b. The Native Born of Foreign or Mixed Parentage.

This element, in 1910, amounted to 7,172, forming 13.8 per cent of the total population of the city. Of these, 4,987 were native born with both parents foreign born. The nationality of the parents of this latter group is given by the census, and gives us some information concerning the national origin of the older immigrants in the city. The census data show that the parents of 32 per cent were German born, and the parents of 18 per cent were Irish born. The two combined account for the nationality of one-half of the group under consideration.

Of note in this connection is the utter lack of Scandinavians. There were, in 1910, but 3 people in the city with Norwegian parents, and but 16 with Swedish parents. The fact of the matter is that there are more inhabitants of the city, with both parents born in France than there are with Scandinavian born parents. The census gives 30 people with both parents born in France.

The other half of the native born with both parents foreign born is accounted for by Austria, Hungary, Rus-

sia, Italy and a small scattering from several other countries. The percentages for the four named nations are 15, 8, 8, and 5.4, respectively.

Turning to the distribution within the city of the native born of foreign and mixed parentage, one discovers a condition similar to that pointed out with reference to the foreign born. Seventy-three per cent, or, in general terms, three out of every four, were located, in 1910, in the same five wards that were named as the section containing the overwhelming portion of the foreign born. There is a rather sharp line of cleavage. Very few persons of foreign stock, using that term in the sense that the United States census uses it, can be found in the central or western part of the city.

On the other hand, it must be noted that this section is not solidly inhabited by those of foreign stock. While most foreigners are in this section, not all, or nearly all, in this section are of foreign stock. There is a substantial native element, composed of the poorer laboring classes and some more prosperous families, who have withstood the movement towards the western section of the city.

### c. The Native Born of Native Parents.

This element in 1910 formed 74 per cent of the population of the city. Their exact number was 38,368. It is apparent therefore that we are dealing with a city whose people are predominantly of native stock. It has been pointed out that the foreign stock lives in the eastern part of the city, close to the railroad and the river. The western wards are exclusively inhabited by the native stock.

Since the population figures of Allentown show the city to have been transformed within the last few decades, and the increase does not seem to have resulted from any large influx of foreigners, whence then came the many newcomers? Any old resident of the town will quickly answer. And the answer will be the same from every one. The rural districts, lying about the city, contributed heavily to the population, especially in the last decade of the 19th century, and the opening years of the 20th century. Nor is it necessary to depend upon general observation. Several interesting groups of data, on this point, are at hand.



In the spring of 1917, a little book was published containing the pictures and biographical sketches of 147 men in the city. Most of the city's public and professional men were included. An analysis of the 147 sketches shows that 25 per cent of these men were born in Allentown, 54 per cent came to the city from the outlying rural districts, and 21 per cent from somewhat more distant cities and places.

Similarly, the writer tabulated data from 500 consecutive biographical sketches of Allentonians, given in the second and third volumes of the Lehigh County Anniversary History. An analysis of the data shows that 25 per cent of the subjects of the sketches were born in Allentown, 53 per cent were born in the near outlying districts and then migrated into the city, and 22 per cent were born in the more distant cities and places. These two analyses are cited because it is believed that they are indicative of a general situation.

It is also pertinent at this point to peer into the historical background to determine, if possible, the origin of this native stock. Allentown is located in Lehigh County, which, together with Berks and Northampton counties, are generally spoken of as Pennsylvania "Dutch" counties.

The influx of German settlers into Pennsylvania is a well known historical fact. "The principal port of entry for German immigration before the Revolution was Philadelphia."<sup>9</sup> And "previous to the Revolution it is estimated that over 100,000 Germans and Swiss settled in Pennsylvania alone."<sup>10</sup> German immigrants of course went into other states, but "the German settlements in Pennsylvania were more numerous and more important than those of all the other states combined. In the other states the Germans formed but a small percentage of the population, and have influenced but little the character of the State development; while those in Pennsylvania have from the beginning down to the present time formed at least one-third of the population."<sup>11</sup> This estimate of one-third agrees with the estimates of Dr. Rush, Benjamin Franklin and other authorities.

<sup>9</sup> Faust, "The German Element in the United States." Vol. 1, p. 111.

<sup>10</sup> Kuhns, "German and Swiss Settlements of Pennsylvania." p. 1.

<sup>11</sup> Kuhns, p. 30.

One of the most interesting points of view from which to regard Pennsylvania in colonial days is as the center of distribution of foreign immigration. Kuhns, in commenting on this point, says: "The earliest arrivals of the people with whom we have to do in this book remained in Germantown, Philadelphia, or the immediate vicinity. Shortly after the beginning of the new century they began to penetrate the dense forests which then covered the present counties of Montgomery, Lancaster and Berks. As the lands nearest to Philadelphia became gradually taken up, the settlers were forced to make their way further and further to the West. When no more lands remained on this side of the Susquehanna, the Germans crossed the river and founded the counties of York and Cumberland. Still later they spread over Northampton, Dauphin, Lehigh, Lebanon, and the other counties, while toward the end of the century the tide of colonization swept to the South and the newly opened West."<sup>12</sup> Similarly, Fisher writes: "The Germans held Lancaster, Berks, Montgomery, and Lehigh Counties, retaining the language and customs of their native country and living to themselves. They developed a dialect of debased German and English, which is still spoken in the districts they first occupied, and to this day they retain a large share of their original German characteristics."<sup>13</sup>

Concerning their national origin, Faust writes: "Though living in various parts of the United States, the pre-Revolutionary Germans all belonged to the same general type, since they came from a common stock and home, mainly from the Rhine countries and Switzerland, and on their arrival met similar conditions in the American colonies. They were not paupers, though a great many of them, to pay for their transportation, were compelled to pledge themselves to several years of servitude. They were not wealthy, though many of them brought with them sums of money that they had realized from the sale of their lands at home. The later they settled in America the farther west they were obliged to move, not being able to purchase the land where it had become expensive, i. e., along the coastline. Therefore, whether

<sup>12</sup> Faust, op. cit., p. 59. <sup>13</sup> Fisher, "Men, Women and Manners in Colonial Times." Vol. 1, p. 345.

in Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland, Virginia, or the Carolinas, they constantly became the settlers of the frontier, which they defended, and assisted in pushing back farther and farther to the westward. The German settler became a recognized type of frontiersman, and being most numerous in Pennsylvania, or most frequently coming from there, he received the name Pennsylvania Dutch, or Pennsylvania German."<sup>14</sup>

It has been shown that Lehigh County, in which Allentown is located, was settled by the Germans. It is clear, therefore, that the majority of Allentonians should be drawn from this stock under normal circumstances. And our brief review of the history of the city showed no abnormal conditions developing until within the past few years to change the complexion of the stock. In the previously cited analysis of 500 histories of residents of the city, the data of national origin were also compiled, together with the date of the migration into this country of the original ancestor. This compilation shows that 85 per cent of the residents included are of German stock, 4 per cent are of Swiss origin, 3 per cent are English, 2 per cent are Irish, 1 per cent Huguenot, 2 per cent Welsh, and 3 per cent not given. Attention however is called to the fact that this proportion does not exist with reference to the population as a whole, but it is believed that the summary cited is indicative of the national origin of the native stock, from which stock most of the sketches included in the study are drawn. To what extent, statistically, these five hundred names embrace representatives of the old stock, can be seen in the next paragraph.

The ancestors of 56 per cent of the 500 cases tabulated came to this country before 1750. The ancestors of 11 per cent began life in the New World between 1750 and 1800. In other words, 67 per cent, or two out of every three date their family trees back to the 18th century. Regarding the remaining 33 per cent, 18 per cent go to the 19th century, 1 per cent to the 20th century, and 14 per cent not clearly given. In the majority of cases, the name and the sketch of the family suggests classification among the 18th century group.

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<sup>14</sup> Faust, *op. cit.*, pp. 129, 130.

It can safely be said in summary therefore, that the native stock, i. e., the native born of native parents, are for the most part of German origin, in a majority of cases going back to the middle of the 18th century, and undergoing at present, for the first time in the family history, the process of urbanization. We are dealing primarily with a group of Pennsylvania Germans, drawn within the last twenty-five years, to a large extent, from the surrounding farms and rural villages. These are facts of common knowledge in the city itself.

#### Characteristics of the People.

It is always a difficult matter to offer any judgment or description of an age or of a people in general terms which is not open to criticism on at least two scores. One is the fact that any sweeping statement must, out of necessity, override a host of contrary individual facts. The other is that the statement may be of such a general nature as to imply very little that is really definite. Ages and peoples have a tantalizing habit of refusing to be truthfully summarized and dismissed in a few short phrases. Then too, the longer one lives among a people, the more one becomes a part of them. Close proximity obscures vision and prevents that distant and impartial view so necessary for scientific approximation in things of this kind.

In this particular case, however, the task is rendered easy to a degree by the fact that the predominant element, the Pennsylvania Germans, settled in certain communities, lived a distinct life, intermarried, and developed a distinctive type. The tenacity with which they have held to the dialect for centuries, as well as its universality until a short time ago, is but a concrete expression of the tenacity of the distinctive type. One hopes therefore to be freed from presumption in attempting that which often is a most precarious venture.

To begin with, the people of Allentown have been, historically speaking, a conservative people. Kuhns, himself of this stock, in discussing this point, says: "One trait has persisted down to the present—the strong spirit of conservatism. This has from the very beginning been blamed by their English-speaking neighbors, who a century ago called them stubborn and headstrong; and even today the State historian is apt to call attention to the

fact that the Germans are slow to move along those lines in which the Anglo-Saxon is rushing forward. This conservatism has its good and bad sides. No doubt it would be better for some village communities to have more of the 'hustle' of the west, or of the education and refinement of certain aristocratic communities of New England. On the other hand, it is certain that lack of repose is a great weakness of our national life; 'Ohne Hast, Ohne Rast,' is an excellent motto, but Americans in general cut the Goethean proverb into two parts, and thrown away the first." <sup>15</sup> Nothing better evidences this conservative spirit so characteristic of the typical Pennsylvania German than his persistence in clinging to the "Dutch" dialect. Kuhns recognizes this fact when he writes: "Among the most interesting phenomena connected with the Pennsylvania Germans none is more striking than their persistence in clinging to their dialect. Here we have a group of people living in the very heart of the United States, surrounded on all sides by English-speaking people, almost every family having some of its branches thoroughly mixed by intermarriage with these people, yet still after the lapse of nearly two hundred years retaining to a considerable degree the language of their ancestors. Even in large and flourishing cities like Allentown, Reading and Bethlehem much of the intercourse in business and home life is carried on in this patois." <sup>16</sup> Similarly, Prof. F. J. Turner, writing in the *Chicago Record-Herald* of September 4th, 1901, gives as one of the influences of the German element, that "they have infused into the American stock and society a conservatism and sturdy persistence and solidity useful in moderating the nervous energy of the native Americans."

Of course it must be noted that these quotations were all written at the beginning of the twentieth century. Even Kuhns, writing in 1900, was able with truth to say that "in recent years, however, this state of affairs has much changed: With the growth of towns and cities, with the progress of manufactures, with the intermarriage and mingling with their neighbors, the old conservative spirit has largely passed away." <sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Kuhns, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* p. 115. <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 151.

If that was true then, it is more so seventeen years later. This is clearly indicated, as far as Allentown is concerned, in the passing of the dialect. The younger generations, even many in the older groups, can speak but little of it. There are sections in the western part of the city where one seldom hears it. The writer, living in the western part of the town, has gone days without hearing a single word of Pennsylvania "Dutch" spoken. Kuhns wrote with truth that "railroads, telegraphs and trolley cars are levelling the distances, and making the inhabitants of Eastern Pennsylvania a more and more homogeneous mass. A potent factor of this process is the constant intermarriage between Germans and their English-speaking neighbors. In no State in the Union is there a more thorough mingling of nationalities than here."<sup>18</sup> It has been pointed out what advantages for travel and communication with other sections of the country there are in Allentown. And this moving about, together with the newer elements that are coming into the town, are making the dialect a matter of derision. The young are ashamed to speak it. Children are no longer taught it. And with the passing of the dialect, there is passing that conservatism, usually referred to in this community as "thick-headedness" which was once so characteristic of the people. Allentown has been growing, in numbers, and away from its old moorings. Constant mingling as lecturer and writer with the people of the city and Lehigh Valley during the past five years, has shown the writer a progressive spirit crystallizing that is nothing short of amazing. Should the present tendency continue to move the mass of people along progressive lines, it will be but a short time until one will refer to the former conservatism as a relic of the "good old days."

In conclusion, of this conservative spirit, it must be added too that such conservatism as remains manifest today cannot be called stubbornness and unwillingness to accept anything in the line of innovations. It is rather a tendency to play the game safe by following the beaten path until the innovation has been tested and proved thoroughly.

Another strong trait of the Pennsylvania German in the past has been his individualism. "It is seen in his

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<sup>18</sup> Kuhns, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

independence in politics, his particularism in religion, his agitation for personal liberty. He has no feeble fear of what his neighbors think of him, nor does he care to conform for the sake of conformity to the common pattern of social form." <sup>19</sup> This trait has frequently led him to excess, to isolation, or to lack of cooperation. He is self-centered and self-reliant. He has, as a rule, prospered, and he attributes his prosperity to the fact that he minds his own business. And minding his own business, he expects other people to do the same.

What has been said of the Pennsylvania German in this regard, can be said to an extent of the people of Allentown. The isolation and the failure to get together that attends individualism, has been, in the years gone by, a serious handicap to the city in many of its endeavors. In part, this can with truth be charged against most eastern cities. It was, however, pronounced in Allentown. But the last five to ten years have also witnessed a change in this respect. As a member of the staff of the leading local newspaper, the writer has had occasion to "cover" numerous civic events within the past year. The amount of community spirit that is developing is remarkable. One almost exhausted vocabulary and adjectives in attempting to dress up verbally each civic venture which was the first of its kind to be started in the city during the past year. Allentonians are in the stage now where they are learning the tremendous possibilities in civic cooperation, and in the flush of discovery, are moving ahead by leaps and bounds. The older individualism, like the older conservatism, is hanging on, but it has seen its day. Tomorrow it will be an historical curiosity.

The Pennsylvania German people are a home-loving people. Many writers have noted this characteristic. The family is, in a very definite sense, the unit in society. Men take their families with them in pursuit of pleasure. The typical German in this section dislikes a flat as a place of residence. He wants to live in a house, because the house is the visible expression of that which is so desirable to him.

That the German stock in Allentown is characterized by this tendency can be gleaned from the percentage cited

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<sup>19</sup> Faust, *supra.*, Vol. II, p. 472.

of residents owning their own homes. It is, relatively speaking for a city of this size, a most difficult matter to rent a house in Allentown. Rows after rows are erected by building contractors, but they are built to sell, and sold they are. The typical Allentonian is most happy when he lives in a house, which he owns. And this house-owning custom is the result of a desire to have the home group properly housed, with the necessary space for it to live and move and have its happy being. The customary thing for the typical young Allentonian to do is to marry young, have children, invest his first hundred or two of savings in the purchase of a home. And then, if, after years of saving and scraping, that home is paid for, and cleared of debt, the family has reached its acme of realization.

This love of happy home life also evidences itself in the selection of a mate. Young Romeos in this section have been, through all the years dating from the settlement in the State, in the habit of inquiring, not if the prospective Juliet be rich or poor, or if she possess personal and mental accomplishments, but whether she be industrious and acquainted with the duties of a good housewife. Pennsylvania German wives, including of course Allentown wives, have always had, and still have, the reputation of being good cooks. The women are domestic. The emphasis, in judging their worth and desirability, is laid on household arts, such as cooking, sewing, care of the body and children.

It is of course easy to over-emphasize this point. All national groups have home-loving traits. All groups have women with domestic virtues. In matters of this kind, one is apt to find that which one is looking for. It is however believed, and it has been stated many times by many observers, that these traits of domesticity are, relatively speaking, in receipt of more emphasis among this group than among certain other well-defined elements in the national population. On the other hand, Allentown, like every other town, has its domestic infelicities, its family discords, its marital infidelities, and abundance of divorce court proceedings. It seems, however, to be a fact that these things are less typical, relatively speaking, even if perchance as numerous, among this group under consideration here.



The people of Allentown, i. e., the native stock, are thrifty and economical. They live sparingly and spend little. They are afraid of debt. Economy and thrift are the watchwords of their daily life. But they like to have money and will spend large sums for anything upon which they set their hearts. But no matter how great the expenditure, one can always detect a thick stream of resolute determination not to part with money on slight pretexts. The accumulation of money has no terrors for them. Simple and inexpensive the daily life remains, despite the growing hoard. Such a shrewd observer as Albert Bushnell Hart, in discussing this trait, says: "They have set to the whole nation an example of industry, thrift and respect for the rights of others."<sup>20</sup> Visitors from other parts of the country have frequently expressed themselves to the point that despite the number of wealthy citizens, there are no spenders in Allentown. This is partly true, partly untrue. Allentown does have so-called spenders, but in spending, no matter what amounts, there is never the impression of careless generosity, but rather one of caution and foresight.

The people of Allentown, in common with the rest of the Pennsylvania German stock in the State, are noted for their industriousness. Faust says: "Above all things the German loves his work. He is not forever exercising his ingenuity as to how he may do the least work for the most pay, or escape work altogether, but he plunges in and enjoys his work, knowing the force of the proverb, 'Arbeit macht das Leben suess.'"<sup>21</sup>

With this trait, goes another one. The native stock of this city is characterized by a marked respect for law and order, and for the officers that represent it. The typical Allentonian obeys the law, even though he may grumble a bit about it. There is nothing like public disorder. There are practically no strikes.

In short, we are dealing with a people who are steady rather than brilliant; shrewd and economical, rather than stingy on the one hand or reckless on the other; a people not clever, but careful; a sturdy, happy, prosperous, contented, home-loving, law-abiding, smug, somewhat complacent, conservative, a bit individualistic people; a peo-

<sup>20</sup> The Pennsylvania German. A Magazine. Nov., 1907.

<sup>21</sup> Faust, supra., Vol. II, p. 470.

ple who have retained for centuries these traits of their fathers, proud of them in many ways, realizing the value of their virtue, but a people who are now in the process of undergoing tremendous changes, changes that will make for better and for worse. Many of them are being assimilated with the Anglo-Saxon element of the American stock, others still stubbornly persist in their distinctive Germanism—an ethnical entity, a wedge so to speak, thrust into the very heart of the United States. But even the persistent element is being mightily transformed today under the force of the complex influences that grow out of the modern city wilderness. In their transformation, many of this element are at a loss, only appreciating that the ropes of life are a bit snarled, but seeing no hope or way out. The majority however are seeing the dawning light of the new democracy, of the new community, and are resolutely bringing to the wheel of progressive development the might of their sturdy strength. Allentown is in a process of transition. On the surface, the superficial observer will see only the Pennsylvania German yeomanry. More careful study will reveal an undercurrent of modernness that is cutting away from the old moorings, and sailing through an unplotted sea towards the haven erected by a socialized Americanism. The undercurrent itself is vague. Only it is there. And its presence is making for a city in ferment in which much of the old, both good and bad, is disappearing without leaving an effervescence.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE DENOMINATIONAL BACKGROUND OF THE CITY.

In our characterization of the Pennsylvania Germans, one essential characteristic was omitted intentionally and reserved for this chapter. It is their piety. On this point Kuhns writes: "No one who has made a careful study of the habits and customs of the German and Swiss settlers of Pennsylvania in the eighteenth century can resist the conclusion that they were essentially a deeply religious people."<sup>1</sup> Again, a page or two farther: "We have ample evidence that, scattered as they were in the wilderness which then formed the interior counties of Pennsylvania, the people hungered and thirsted for the word of God. \* \* \* In fact no people in America were so subject to religious excitements as the Germans of Pennsylvania during the eighteenth century."<sup>2</sup>

Allentown, as a center of Pennsylvania German activity, was influenced by the prevailing activity. As a city which in its origin was almost exclusively Germanic, it is clear that the earliest religious activities were those of the pietistic Germans. What was the denominational bias of these early German settlers? What imprint was given to the little town at its origin? Let us survey the background of the city, religiously speaking, so that we may have the proper light for the study of today.

The 16th and 17th centuries were an age of great religious activity. Men's minds were pre-occupied with religious questions. In breaking with the old and historic Roman church, ancient standards were broken down, and time-honored authority disappeared. It was inevitable that in the evolution of new religious orders, sharp differences of opinion should appear as to the trend which the new development should take. Now here, now there, a man would begin to teach religious faith and truth and duty as they looked to him. He obtained adherents. A congregation would spring up, and a new sect

<sup>1</sup> Kuhns, *supra*. p. 153.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 155.

would come into being. It was an age of the formation of new sects.

“The Reformation in England gave rise to as many sects and parties as it did on the continent. We may find an analogy between the Lutheran Church and the Church of England; between the Reformed (or Calvinists) and the Puritans (or Presbyterians); and between the Anabaptists or Mennonites and the Quakers and Baptists. This analogy is no mere fancy; we know the influence of Calvin on Puritanism; the Hanoverian kings of England were both Lutheran and Churchmen (the former in their private, the latter in their official capacity); and modern church historians have declared that it was from the Mennonites that the General Baptist Church in England sprang.”<sup>3</sup>

Of the sects most important in their relation to the New World are the Quakers. And of all the Quakers, William Penn and George Fox are the best known. Of the latter, who is generally spoken of as the founder of the Quaker movement in England, Barclay writes: “We are compelled to view him as the unconscious exponent of the doctrines, practise, and discipline of the ancient and stricter party of the Dutch Mennonites.”<sup>4</sup>

Whichever influenced the other, the fact remains that “there were in Germany a number of sects, Mennonites, Tunkers, Schwenkfelders, and others who held the same view as the Quakers. They were part of a great movement of thought, sometimes called Quietism (Pietism), which towards the close of the Reformation had spread all over Europe, producing the Quakers in England, a whole host of sects like them in Germany, and even effecting to some extent the people of Italy and France.”<sup>5</sup>

As these historians have indicated, there developed in Germany a movement called Pietism. When William Penn became a Quaker, he was filled with missionary fervor, and among his other labors in the mission field, were two trips to those sections in Germany most under the sway of this movement. His second visit there coincided with the height of the pietistic movement in Germany.

<sup>3</sup> Kuhns, pp. 32, 33.

<sup>4</sup> Barclay, “Religious Societies of the Commonwealth.” p. 77.

<sup>5</sup> Fisher, *supra.*, Vol. 1. p. 344.

“Penn was received with open arms in these Pietistic circles, he was listened to with reverence and admiration by devoted hearers in the Rhine country.”<sup>6</sup> And the explanation is not far to seek, for English Quakerism and German Pietism were branches of the same tree, and greatly similar. “A great degree of similarity existed between the doctrines of the Pietist and the Quaker. A higher valuation of emotion and spirituality, as opposed to rationalism, characterized both of them; a life led in imitation of the Savior, a communing with his spirit, a religion of the heart, supplanted the outward formalism of an established church.”<sup>7</sup> Both must be looked upon as a revolt against the stiff formalism into which the established churches had fallen, a turning away from the coldness of their dogmatic theologies to the ecstasies of religious emotions.

But the significance of that journey lay ultimately not in the establishment of intimate relations between two similar sects in two different countries, but in the opening of a political and social movement. For it stirred those waves of immigration that threatened to depopulate southwestern Germany and overrun the new country that Penn opened. “The German and Dutch Mennonites in Crefield and Kriegsheim had representatives in the first shipload that went to Penn’s land.”<sup>8</sup>

When William Penn opened his tract in the New World, which the English Crown had given to him, he seems to have had in mind the establishment of a haven for distressed English Quakers. And while the Quakers did come in large quantities, the movement of population from the Pietistic centers on the continent developed parallel to the movement of Englishmen from the very beginning, continuing during the 18th century down until the Revolution, and assuming considerable proportions.

There were many reasons for this extensive exodus from the continent. There was of course the similarity of religious doctrines and beliefs. But this is by no means all. The movement of population was largely economic. On the one hand was the wide advertising of the political and economic advantages and opportunities

<sup>6</sup> Faust, condensed from p. 31.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 31.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 32.

in the new land, but the fundamental fact which prepared the soil, both for the action of religious influences and the pretensions of Penn's advertisements, was the depressed economic condition of most of the sections which poured forth their people. A series of wars, destructive beyond comprehension almost, centering largely in the Palatinate and several other small German states along the Rhine, had stript the people of all, or most, of their store of this world's good. Despotic governments, laying excessive taxes and inflicting tyrannical acts upon their subjects, had intensified the widespread poverty and unrest. The Palatinate especially had borne the brunt of these distressing factors. It had been the Belgium of several wars. The great bulk of the population was in an economic and mental condition to listen to the wooing of the emigrant siren.

Immigration into Pennsylvania began, as intimated on the preceding page, in 1683. Up to 1710, which date is generally taken as the close of the first epoch of immigration, the number coming to Pennsylvania was small, and religiously, were Mennonites of Dutch and German nationality. After 1710, following the devastation of the Palatinate by the armies of Louis 14th of France, the tide assumed larger proportions. Swiss Mennonites and Palatines began coming, followed by Dunkards, Schwenkfelders and other queer denominational species. They came in ever larger numbers, assuming such proportions by 1717, that serious alarm was excited among the English settlers in the colony. Kuhns estimates that by 1727, about 15,000 German and Swiss colonists had come into Pennsylvania.

After 1727, an official record was kept of all those who entered at the port of Philadelphia. And from 1727 to 1775, there was a total of 68,872. This plainly shows one thing, and that is that the movement grew beyond the Mennonites and Pietistic sects. Fisher, in speaking of the coming of the early Mennonites, continues: "They came in great numbers, and were followed by German Lutherans and members of the German Reformed church. Penn and the Quakers had not intended to bring the Lutheran and Reformed. But the immigration movement once started, could not be checked, and soon the

German peasantry without regard to religion began to swarm into Pennsylvania.”<sup>9</sup>

Similarly, Faust writes: “The three most important religious denominations, however, were the Lutherans, the German Reformed and the United Brethren. They were not prominent in the earliest history of the German settlements in Pennsylvania, though they may have been represented. Being far more numerous in the mother country, they were bound to become more and more prominent as the current of German immigration grew in volume. This applies especially to the Lutheran and Reformed.”<sup>10</sup>

The significance of this historical survey to our local study now becomes apparent. We have shown in the first chapter that the earliest German immigrants located at Philadelphia, the port of entry, and in the territory immediately surrounding it, that the longer the stream continued, the farther into the interior the new-comers had to go, crossing the Susquehanna, then finally going northward and settling the counties of Northampton and Lehigh. Similarly, an effort has been made to show that while the immigrant tide into Pennsylvania began with the Pietistic sects, it soon exhausted that supply, and the stream, in its religious complexion, became Lutheran and Reformed. The inference naturally is that the farther, in point of time, one proceeds along the stream, the more Lutheran and Reformed it becomes in its sectarian coloring.

Lehigh was one of the last counties to be occupied by the Pennsylvania Germans. Allentown itself, we have noted, was settled in 1762. Historically, therefore, one would suppose that Allentown was settled, denominationally speaking, by the Lutheran and Reformed. And since, as has been noted, much of the present population not explained by natural increase, has been drawn from the surrounding country, also settled by people of these denominations, the logical expectation is to find Allentown today, in fact all through its history, a community which, from the denominational point of view, is and has been largely Lutheran and Reformed, with a sprinkling of United Brethren, and a few groups, descendants of pietistic sects that might have wandered into the general

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<sup>9</sup> Fisher, *supra*. Vol 1, p. 344.

<sup>10</sup> Faust, *supra*. Vol. 1, p. 116.

section. Let us proceed now to examine the specific situation as it has been.

**Church Activities From the Founding of the City to 1830.**

The period under consideration embraces seven years less than three-quarters of a century. It is that period in the history of Allentown which may be referred to as the village period. The population grew from a dozen families at the time of its founding to 1,757 in 1830. During this period, the Reformed and Lutheran churches were alone in the field. Both denominations date their origin in Allentown to the year that the town was founded. In 1762, a log church building was erected by the Reformed and Lutheran inhabitants of the town and vicinity, in which the two congregations worshiped alternately. The site of this first humble edifice was on the rear of the lot where Zion's Reformed Church, the oldest in the city, now stands. The practice of alternate worship in the same structure lasted for some years.

However, in 1770, "permission was granted to the congregation (Reformed) by Governor Penn to collect funds by means of a lottery for the purpose of erecting a new church building."<sup>11</sup> This building was completed by 1776, and was the exclusive property of the Reformed congregation. It was known as Zion's Reformed Church.

An interesting point to note in connection with the history of this particular church is the fact that the Liberty Bell and the chimes of Christ church, nine in number, were concealed beneath the floor of the church in September, 1777, when the British troops occupied Philadelphia. During the years 1777 and 1778, the church building was used as a hospital for sick and wounded Continental soldiers.

The congregation seems to have grown but slowly, for in 1782, a membership of 45 families was reported, while by 1831, there were but 75 members.

The Lutheran congregation, hampered by ministerial vacancies and irregular services, continued to worship in the old log building until 1794, when a new and larger structure was begun on South Eighth street, on the site now occupied by St. Paul's Lutheran Church. This new building was consecrated in 1795.

<sup>11</sup> "Anniversary History of Lehigh County." Vol. 1, p. 495.



While these two congregations were the only religious organizations which the period produced, there were, nevertheless, several eruptions which indicated that such a condition would not prevail much longer. During the year 1820, as a result of the efforts of several Presbyterian residents, who were dissatisfied with the exclusive use of the German language in the Reformed and Lutheran churches, and, it would seem, with the general laxity of church discipline, succeeded in arranging matters for a minister of their faith from Bethlehem to preach several times in Allentown. Similarly in that year, a Presbyterian minister from Easton preached twice in Allentown. "From 1821 to 1824, Rev. Robert Russell, pastor of the Presbyterian church in the 'Irish Settlement' preached at Allentown frequently on Sunday afternoons. Rev. Samuel Bowman from Easton, preached here several times during 1826; Rev. J. A. Hicks, also of Easton, several times during 1827; and Rev. L. F. Leake, a missionary under the 'Domestic Missionary Society of New Jersey' on Sundays for six months in 1828, who gave special encouragement to the Sunday School movement in the town."<sup>12</sup>

There was also some little activity on the part of the Episcopalian church during this period. "There were religious services at Allentown in behalf of the Episcopal denomination as early as 1825, by Rev. Rodney, of Easton, and Rev. Bowman, of Lancaster, but no progress was made in this German community and further efforts were abandoned until 1858."

Likewise did the Evangelical Association make an effort to enter the field. Since this denomination is not so widely known, it may be not out of place to say a few words in explanation. According to the venerable and beloved Bishop Thomas Bowman, D. D., who is perhaps as familiar as any other man with the entire history of the denomination, the Evangelical Association originated as a result of the religious activities of Jacob Albright, a native of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and at one time a member of the Lutheran church. Albright was convicted of sin, and converted to God, according to Bishop Bowman, in 1792. He united with the Methodist Episcopal church, which licensed him as an exhorter. But

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<sup>12</sup> *Supra.*, p. 522.

the Methodist Episcopalals conducting their services in the English language, Albright, who was a German, and working among the German speaking people, felt constrained to form a separate religious organization. He began his labors as a lay preacher in 1796, and by 1803, he had begun the separate organization and was licensed as a preacher. The movement was essentially a reformation, growing out of the conviction of Albright and others, that the ideals and conditions of religious life among the German people around them were shamefully low. The doctrines of the Evangelical Association were, and are, in no essential part, different from those of the Methodist Episcopal church. The same thing is true of the government, polity and methods of work. It was begun purely as a Germanization of the English Methodist Episcopal church.

“Lehigh County was visited by Rev. Albright in the year 1800, at which time he preached at Lynnville and Macungie. Later the work of the new organization was introduced into the county at three different places, viz: Upper Milford, Cedar Creek and Allentown.”<sup>13</sup> The attempt on the part of the ministers of this sect to preach in Allentown met however with a reception that was far from encouraging. The first attempt, made in 1818, ended in ignominious failure, due to the presence of a young man who disturbed the services by ridiculing and imitating the preacher. The faithful were no doubt much encouraged when the sacrilegious youth was struck, a short time afterwards, by a bolt of lightning. A second effort was similarly interrupted when four men, using a log as a battering ram, broke down the door of the house where the preacher was holding forth. This so alarmed the occupant of the house that no further attempts at holding services were made.

It appears that there were some Catholics in Allentown during this period. We find that they petition the Governor of the colony in 1767 for a license to “ask assistance from charitable and piously disposed people.”<sup>14</sup> There is no indication that this petition was granted, nor that any further effort was made during the period towards erecting a church for their use. Such Catholics as

<sup>13</sup> *Supra.*, p. 524.

<sup>14</sup> *Penna. Arch.* Vol. IV., p. 279.

resided in Allentown were ministered to by Jesuits from Berks County.

**The Period From 1830 to 1850.**

During this score of years, no additions were made to the number of Reformed and Lutheran churches, despite the fact that the population of the town more than doubled. A growth in membership in these two old churches there undoubtedly was, but the main interest of this period lies in the advent into the religious history of the city, of three revolutionary Protestant bodies.

The first to be noted, as well as the first in point of time, was the Presbyterian church. Towards the close of 1829, a total of \$335 had been subscribed towards the erection of a building for use by the members of that particular faith. "On June 5th, 1830, the ground was broken for the foundation, and on Thursday, June 24th, at 2 p. m., the corner stone was laid."<sup>15</sup> It was not until the next year however that an organization was effected. "On Friday, September 30th, 1831, the Rev. Alexander Heberton, and James Kennedy, an Elder in the Church at the 'Settlement' in Allen Township, convened in the session room, with others, for the purpose of constituting a Presbyterian Church. Five persons were received on examination and profession of faith, and three by certificate, and these were constituted a church under the title: 'The First Presbyterian Church in Northampton.'"<sup>16</sup>

The Methodist Episcopal church was the next to gain a footing. "Through the religious zeal of two sisters, Elizabeth and Sarah Muffly, who were members of the M. E. Church in Bucks County, and located in Allentown, in 1842, the first efforts were made in establishing a church of this faith in the city."<sup>17</sup> At their request, in 1843, a minister was sent to the city by the Methodist conference. A hall, known as "Free Hall" located on Linden Street near Ninth, was leased. A lot was purchased the next year, and by 1845, a one-story frame meeting house had been erected on the southwest corner of Linden and Poplar Streets. With the adoption of the con-

<sup>15</sup> "History of the First Presbyterian Church, Allentown, Pa." J. W. Wood, D. D. p. 9.

<sup>16</sup> Wood, op. cit., page 10.

<sup>17</sup> Anniversary History, supra., Vol. 1, p. 521.

stitution on September 2nd, 1845, the process of introducing the new denomination was complete.

Finally, the Evangelical Association made another effort to begin formal work in the city. In 1835, a man named John Grove opened his home to a minister of this sect. Other Evangelical preachers preached in the public square on Sunday afternoons, and finally in 1838, the first Evangelical congregation in the city was organized, and a church building was erected at Ninth and Linden Streets. It was dedicated on November 26th, 1838.

The establishment of these new Protestant denominations, with their strange beliefs and new customs, was not effected without considerable difficulty. When, in 1832, the Presbyterians began holding revival services, the first in this region, the other churches, i. e., the Reformed and Lutheran churches, were far from favorably disposed to the innovation. The Presbyterians met with personal insult on the street, private prayer meetings were disturbed, rationalism and infidelity were publicly advocated in the town. Rev. Jacob Helfenstein, who came to the church as a temporary supply, in 1835, was rather frank in his condemnation of sin, and we read of the following interesting effect upon the town: " \* \* \* In others, as has often occurred in connection with the Spirit's work, the latent enmity of the heart against God found occasion for a violent development, and an intensely malicious form of infidelity came to the surface. Some, with less effrontery, but with a more subtle skepticism, turned in to rail on Christ, and hands that had handled the bread and wine of the Holy Supper, joined the hands of professional despisers to erect the 'Free Hall,' where a motley crowd would go to chuckle over the blasphemies against the Crucified King. The mouthpiece by which this infidelity found vent, in part, was one Grinall, of whom Rev. Helfenstein says: 'Never did ranker infidelity drop from the lips of men than on one occasion I listened to from that wretched deceiver, and what is sad to tell, many of his supporters were church members. In vain did I ask for permission to reply—the proposal was met by a stern and bitter refusal.' Dr. Helfenstein would have been mobbed, says one who was an eye witness, had not the judicious remonstrance of John S. Gibbons, Esq.,

prevailed.”<sup>18</sup> When one considers the situation as it then existed, with but a Reformed and Lutheran church in the town, the reference to “hands that handled the bread and wine of the Holy Supper” and to the fact that “many of his supporters were church members” would indicate that the relations between the old churches and the new reforming congregation with its frank preaching, were not overly cordial.

The Methodists probably fared worse than the Presbyterians at the hands of townfolk. Their revival meetings, while most successful from the Methodist point of view, met with considerable opposition from other sources. Warm-hearted converts were arrested and put to jail on the rather peculiar charge of assault and battery. Parents came to the meetings forcibly to take away their children, and resisting children seem too, to have landed behind the bars. The brethren intensified bitterness against them in many quarters, when they encouraged the children to resist their parents, who, they felt, had no right thus openly to disturb the meetings. When the Methodists erected their little one-story frame building, and finished it in a neat manner, adding carpets and Venetian blinds, the unsympathetic community most readily accused them of the guilt of worldly pride.

The Evangelical worshippers were the supreme object of molestation and ridicule from the community. The Evangelical ministers “were compelled to suffer many insults and indignities, because, as in the days of the Apostles, this ‘new sect’ was everywhere spoken against.”<sup>19</sup> Joshua Fink, having opened his home to the ministers, was ostracized to such an extent that he was compelled to move to a small village outside of Allentown to find employment to support his family.<sup>20</sup> Stones were thrown at the preachers, hoodlums of the town organized excursions to break up prayer meetings at the private homes of the members of the congregation. Social stigma was attached for many years to membership in an Evangelical church, and the present generation is not entirely free from it. This has been our repeated observation.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Wood, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>19</sup> Anniversary History. Vol. 1., p. 527.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 527.

One aspect of the unsatisfactory relationship between the Methodists and Presbyterians on the one hand, and the Reformed and Lutherans on the other hand has been intentionally reserved for this point. This was the language difference. The German language, since the very origin of the Reformed and Lutheran churches, was the principal medium of social and religious intercourse. The early pioneers naturally preferred to worship God in their mother tongue, and desired their children to do likewise. Hence when the Methodists and Presbyterians began holding English services, they were introducing some newfangled thing which threatened the Church's one foundation. It was a dangerous innovation which self-respecting citizens could not tolerate and still retain their self-respect.

By 1850, there were in Allentown, five churches. On the one hand exist the Reformed and Lutheran—old, established, prosperous, conservative, proud of their traditions, despising and ridiculing such innovations as revivals, fearless preaching, the English language, and the like. On the other hand, there were three upstart, reforming churches, the Presbyterians, Methodists and Evangelicals. These were strict in their discipline, active, eager to proselyte, zealous in what was termed the work of the Lord, holding revivals, meeting at private homes to pray, insisting on a strict observance of the Sabbath and the various injunctions of the organization. The situation marks the beginning of a definite and open cleavage in Allentown Protestantdom, the end of which is not yet.

#### Church Development From 1850 to 1890.

This period, as indicated in the first chapter, was a period during which a peaceful little town of 3,700 people was transformed into a busy industrial city of 25,000. The religious developments of the period, will, for the purpose of convenience, be treated under three sub-headings: a. The growth and development of facilities for worship in the older, more firmly established, Reformed and Lutheran churches; b. The fortunes of the new sects that gained a foothold in the previous period; c. The newest denominational groups added.

a. Let us deal then first with the development in the older and more firmly established denominations. Turning to the Reformed faith, we find that Zion's church was the sole Reformed church in Allentown until 1866. Its growth since 1831, when a membership of 75 was reported, was rapid. In 1860, a total of 1,200 members was reported. But since the middle of the century, the younger members of the congregation, influenced by the newcomers to the city's population and by the public schools which introduced an entire English curriculum, began to grow restless with the exclusive use in church services of the German language. An occasional English service was finally thrown to this element as a sop, but this did not satisfy the pressing want, and in 1865, some bold and venturesome spirits began to take measures looking towards the organization of a separate and exclusively English Reformed church. Such a step, fifty years ago in Allentown, was no light matter. But after some negotiations, in January, 1886, the organization of the new church was perfected and given the name of "St. John's English Reformed Church." The new building was completed in 1869, and is located at Sixth and Walnut Streets.

In 1875, some sixty or more members from Zion's and St. John's churches, formed a third Reformed congregation in the city, finally locating on Chew street, between Sixth and Seventh. It might be added here that this is now the largest Reformed congregation in the United States, having some 1800 members, and worshipping in a beautiful edifice, erected at a cost of over \$100,000. It is known as Salem's Reformed Church.

The next year, 1876, in July, a fourth Reformed congregation was formed in the extreme lower, or eastern part of the city. Not a single member was taken from any of the other Reformed churches, proof conclusive of the need and opportunity for the church in that section.

The year 1890 saw, therefore, four Reformed churches, all in flourishing circumstances. The Reformed people had shown themselves alive to the growth of the city, and had used good judgment in the location of their additional organizations. Despite the traditional prejudices against the use of the English language in

church services, the mother church had shown a commendable judiciousness, aiding and abetting an element within itself that hungered after Anglo-linguistic flesh-pots. These four churches reported, in 1890, a total of 2,565 members, of whom 2,167 communed at least once during the year.

Turning to the Lutheran church, one finds a similar unrest developing after the middle of the century with reference to the language question. In 1852, steps were taken looking towards the erection of a separate English Lutheran church. The results of this intended movement were not as peaceful as of the same action some years later by an element in the Reformed church. For no sooner did the English element among the Lutherans decide upon a new church, and plan for the erection of a separate building, than the old German element decided to rebuild their church, thus rendering both projects uncertain of success. The matter was, however, amicably adjusted at last, and a structure erected by the English element at Fifth and Maple streets. On July 16th, 1855, the congregation was organized, and the name of St. John's English Lutheran Church was assumed. This congregation grew rapidly, beginning with 39 members in 1855, and reporting 450 in 1885.

In 1866, the situation in the eastern section of the city, known as "Mingo," appeared to the Lutheran fathers of the city to warrant the establishment of a church in that section, and on July 3rd, 1866, the organization of this, the third Lutheran church in the city, was effected. The name of St. Peter's was adopted. The German language was used exclusively in the services until after the period under consideration in this chapter.

Meanwhile a serious dissension had arisen within the Lutheran fold. "About 1850 there set in a decided reaction in favor of the faith which had for centuries distinguished the Lutheran church, and which was emblazoned on her banner as it was first unfurled on these shores."<sup>21</sup> The results of this reaction were sharp controversies, painful alienations and other untoward incidents. Finally in 1866, there was an open breach, and the Pennsylvania Synod formally severed its connection

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<sup>21</sup> "The Lutherans in America." Edmund Jacob Wolf, D. D. 1889.



with the General Synod, and there was formed the General Council as opposed to the General Synod.

The dissension which led to this rupture lies outside of the purpose of this study. One is concerned with it here only in so far as it effected the situation in the field of this study. And effects soon followed. In January, 1859, Rev. William G. Mennig was elected to the pastorate of St. Paul's Lutheran Church. "His preaching produced a deep spiritual impression resulting in a genuine revival of religion. The 'revival meetings' however did not receive the endorsement of a considerable number of the members, who stigmatized these special services as 'new measures.' The minority, moreover, secured the unwarranted interference of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania (General Council). This in due time induced the pastor and the church to sever their connection with that body, and to unite with the Synod of Eastern Pennsylvania (General Synod), the latter in 1872, the former in the year following.

"But they were not suffered to go in peace. Their opponents instituted legal proceedings for the possession of the property, chiefly on the ground that the East Pennsylvania Synod was not truly Lutheran. In a bitter, long, expensive and now classic trial, St. Paul's, the East Pennsylvania Synod and the General Synod were completely vindicated by favorable decisions in the local and in the Supreme Court of the State. The losers immediately (in 1875) organized St. Michael's Church."<sup>22</sup>

In February, 1875, regular services were begun by this newest congregation, 123 members casting their lot with the venture. The next year the name St. Michael's was adopted, and in 1877 the edifice was completed at a cost of about \$20,000. German services were exclusively maintained until in 1883, when an English evening service was introduced to keep the restless elements quiet. In that year, 1883, the membership reported was 550. The church is located at Ninth and Turner streets.

In 1885, a Sunday School movement was started in the northwestern part of the city by Rev. and Mrs. J. A. Scheffer. Services were held at first in a public school room. Preaching services began shortly afterwards

<sup>22</sup> "St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, a History." George A. Griess. 1912. p. 7.

both in the German and English languages. Finally in 1889, a one-story frame chapel was erected on North Seventh street, near Liberty, and St. Luke's Lutheran Church, as it is known, was definitely organized and located.

Evidently as the result of internal dissension, in answer to a call in the newspapers of Allentown, about 100 persons assembled on the evening of February 4th, 1890, in a vacant store room for the purpose of considering the propriety of establishing another English Lutheran church. It was determined to organize a congregation under the General Synod. The congregation was organized on February 23rd, and Rev. Charles E. Hay, pastor of St. Paul's Church, this city, was elected pastor, resigning his charge in St. Paul's.

By the close of the church year, in 1890, there were, therefore, six Lutheran churches in Allentown. Four of them, St. John's, St. Peter's, St. Michael's and St. Luke's, were under the jurisdiction of the General Council. Two of them, St. Paul's and the newly organized church, known as St. Matthew's, were within the fold of the General Synod. The combined confirmed membership of these six churches in this year was 2,459. This membership was 106 less than that of the Reformed churches in the same year, who had, as has been indicated, but four organizations. Taking simply the four churches of the General Council, which has been the chief competitor of the Reformed church in this section, it is found that the total membership was but 1,919. The history of the Lutheran church in Allentown during this period is marked by internal dissensions, legal tangles, bad spirit, strife, bickerings, wrangles concerning questions of faith and "new measures," all of which led to wasteful duplication of organization and church building, as well as smaller gains of membership per annum. Numerous citizens became disgusted with the course of events in the Lutheran church, and while the writer was engaged in investigations relative to this thesis, there were still to be found old residents whose lukewarmness towards their one-time church was ascribed to the strife of these early days.

b. The fortunes of the new sects that gained a foothold in the previous period.

The three sects which, as has been pointed out, entered the religious arena of Allentown in the previous period, met with varying fortunes.

The Presbyterian church added no additional congregation during these forty years. The work of this denomination was confined to their one congregation. Immediately after the middle of the century, it grew in a most satisfactory manner. "At nearly every communion there continued to be additions to the church, and in the years 1852-1853, there were large in-gatherings of souls by conversion and profession."<sup>23</sup> But the preachers that served the congregation during the disturbed days immediately preceding and during the Civil War had definite convictions and expressed them wisely or otherwise in their public addresses, a fact which "greatly distracted and rent the church; families gave up their pews in disgust and anger, and those who attended no church were not permanently attached to this."<sup>24</sup> In 1865, there were but 130 members on the roll, and but 70 who were actively interested in the church. In that year, a new preacher came, and from then on there were "evidences of the Holy Spirit's presence in the attention given to the preached Word" for the preacher began by delivering "a series of discourses on the geography and history of the lands of the Bible, and on the manners and customs of the people, explanatory of the Scriptures," which it seems "served to conciliate and interest the people, so that attendance was encouragingly increased."<sup>25</sup> From this time on, there seems to have been a slow and steady growth of membership, and the "conciliated" worshippers expressed the "Holy Spirit's presence" in the attention they gave to collections for enlarging and beautifying the sacred edifice.

The Methodist Episcopal Church grew slowly during this forty-year period. Under the system of itineracy, preacher followed preacher in rapid succession, most of them serving the congregation but for a year and then removing to another field. The size of the congregation fluctuated with the personality of the preacher. In 1868, almost a quarter of a century after the church had been

<sup>23</sup> Wood, *supra.*, p. 19.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

begun, the building was enlarged by adding another story. This, perhaps, serves as well as any statement to indicate the growth during these years.

In March, 1872, four men became active in the formation of a second church of this brand of orthodoxy. Revival meetings were started, and after the newly formed band numbered 22, a one-story frame building was erected, and Calvary M. E. Church was in existence. In 1889, this humble structure was enlarged to answer the requirements of the increasing membership.

The difficulties and ridicule under which the Evangelical denomination made its advent into the city have been pointed out. But despite these, the Evangelical church prospered and grew tremendously during this period. In 1858, the membership of the initial church, established in 1838 and known as the Linden Street Church, was 166. The building used for worship was, by that time, too small for the membership, and in 1857, the frame chapel was sold and a new and larger church edifice was erected on Linden street west of Ninth street.

Meanwhile, in 1850, a second Evangelical congregation had been organized in the eastern part of the town, embraced by the First Ward. This second congregation was known as "Immanuel Evangelical Church." It consisted for twenty years of a small group, worshipping in a 36 by 45 frame chapel. But in 1870, there had been a sufficient increase in the membership to warrant the construction of the commodious building used since that day to the present time.

Both of these congregations worshipped in the German language. But the Evangelical church has never been insistingly conservative, and as a result, despite the fact that the general organization had been called into being as a Germanization of the Methodist Episcopal denomination, it was decided that the time was ripe for a congregation exclusively English. Out of this realization, Ebenezer Church, the third Evangelical church in the city, grew in 1868. The same year a lowly, one-story frame chapel was completed. But the congregation grew most rapidly, and the chapel proved unable to hold the growing membership. Accordingly, in 1889 a lot was purchased on Turner street between Sixth and Seventh

streets, and the beautiful and roomy building, still used by the congregation, was erected.

A fourth Evangelical congregation was formed in 1874 to meet the opportunities created by the growth of the city towards the north. Zion's church was located on Liberty street and a building erected which is still used by the congregation as a place of worship.

At the close of our period, by the year 1890, there were four Evangelical congregations in the city, four flourishing, active organizations, each worshipping in a pretentious and commodious church edifice. The combined membership of the four churches was 1,226. Beginning their career in the city 76 years later than the Reformed and Lutheran churches, ridiculed and molested and subjected to various indignities, they had as many churches in the city as the Reformed denomination, and about half as many members as either of the two older organizations. Truly can it be said that their record up to 1890 was such as to signify that henceforth their denomination would play an active part in the religious life of the city.

c. There remains to be considered the story of the various denominational groups who gained a foothold in the city during the forty-year period under consideration. Recalling the fact that during this time the population of the city was multiplied by seven, we would naturally expect that denominations unrepresented in the little town of 1850, would gain a foothold on the wings of a seven hundred per cent increase of population.

The first new denomination to be considered is the Protestant Episcopal. In 1858, "Rev. Azariah Prior was sent to Allentown and he conducted services mostly in the Court House for three years, and different clergymen preached for a year. In September, 1862, under orders from the Board of Missions, Rev. E. N. Potter entered upon his duties here, and from October 5th the preaching by him was regular every Sunday. Efforts were made looking to the establishment of a church and these were finally successful after persevering for three years. A lot was secured on the northwest corner of Linden and Fifth streets, and there the corner stone was laid, April

18th, 1865.”<sup>26</sup> Thus was established Grace Episcopal Church in Allentown.

Mission work, with the object of extending the work of the Episcopal church in the Sixth Ward, was also begun. Services were conducted in this section, and a second church of this faith was established in 1869. Services were held therein until 1886, when, for want of proper support, it was closed.

The Episcopal church in Allentown, after this unsuccessful venture, remained, for the remainder of the period, bound up with the fortunes of the one congregation at Linden and Fifth streets. This congregation grew slowly. The membership in 1890 was about 200. The traditional nationality of the Episcopal faith was not such as to fit into a German community.

It was inevitable that a denomination as numerically important throughout the country as the Baptist church should sooner or later make its advent into the city's religious life. It is rather to be commented upon that its advent came at such a late date. For it was not until 1858, four years less than a century after the founding of the city, that “three members of the Baptist denomination at Allentown, with letters of dismissal from their respective churches, united to organize a congregation of their own faith and accordingly held a meeting in Breinig's Hall on Tuesday evening, September 21, 1858.” Services were conducted in the Court House for about six years, when, in 1864, a lot was secured at Sixth and Chew streets, and the erection of a building begun. This building was completed in 1867 at a cost of \$11,680. The membership in that year was 59. The membership twenty-three years later, at the end of the period covered in this chapter, was 199. The growth of membership can therefore be said to have been satisfactory, but gave no indication of playing a role compared to that of the older denominations, such as the Reformed and Lutheran, or like that presaged by the virile Evangelical flocks.

The United Brethren in Christ church is another newcomer during this period. The United Brethren in Christ must not be confused with the Moravians, or United Brethren, as they are frequently called. The United

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<sup>26</sup> “Anniversary History of Lehigh County.” Vol. 1. p. 522.

Brethren in Christ originated in the United States about the year 1800. Altho it is denied that the church was founded in imitation of Methodism, yet it is certain that the latter exerted a great deal of influence on the former. The two founders of this denomination were Martin Boehm, a Mennonite pastor, and Philipp Otterbein, a native of Prussia, and a peculiarly spiritually-minded Reformed clergyman. "Both Boehm and Otterbein experienced conversion in the genuine Methodist sense of the word, and both, moved by the spirit, began to preach a heart-felt religion. Great success attended their efforts, and thousands crowded their revival services. In 1768, at one of these meetings, they met for the first time, and falling on each other's neck cried out: 'Wir sind Brueder.' " <sup>27</sup>

It was from this incident that the church organization, later formed, took its name of United Brethren in Christ. The new organization, finally formed, as above indicated, in about the year 1800, had a number of Methodist features, as the practise of revivals, the system of itinerant preachers, elders and conferences. The United Brethren in Christ were originally composed almost entirely of Pennsylvania Germans, and are now made up largely of their descendants.

It was not until 1864 that Allentown was selected as an inviting field of activity by the United Brethren in Christ church. In that year a congregation was organized in the city with 54 members. In 1866, "Free Hall," at the corner of Ninth and Linden streets, was purchased. The congregation now numbered 118, and the rapid gain in membership foretokened a roseate future. But the coming years failed to bear out the promise of the first two years. No additional congregations had been organized by 1890. This one congregation, known as Zion U. B. Church, had increased its membership to 169 by 1870, and twenty years later, at the close of our period, it was but 207. Like the Presbyterians, Episcopalians and Baptists, the United Brethren denomination held on, it grew slowly, measured by certain standards even satisfactorily, but like the others named, it was of secondary importance, numerically speaking.

<sup>27</sup> Kuhns, *supra.*, p. 188.

In 1867, a reform branch of the Methodist Episcopal church located a congregation in Allentown. This denomination was organized in 1860, and has been known as the Free Methodist church. Its doctrine, articles and rules are, to a great extent, similar to those of the Methodist Episcopal church. The Free Methodists are Methodists, only more so. Converts are placed on probation for a period before they are admitted to full membership. All members are positively prohibited from forming any connection with secret societies, or from using tobacco or liquor in any form. The local congregation was organized with four members. For some years, services were held in a private home, after which, in 1884 a small frame chapel was erected at Eighth and Chew streets. The membership in 1884 was 20. By 1890, there were 52 members in full standing, with 8 probationers, making a total of 60.

In the beginning of this chapter, it was pointed out that the earliest Germans coming into Pennsylvania were largely of the Mennonite faith, but that the later German immigrants, including those who settled in Lehigh County, were Lutheran and Reformed. One would therefore expect very little, if any, activity on the part of the Mennonites in this section. Nor do the local facts disprove our expectations. The Mennonite type of worship was not formally represented in Allentown before 1886. And the peculiar brand of Mennonite belief introduced was that held by a reform wing of the general Mennonite church, indigenous to Eastern Pennsylvania, and known as the "Mennonite Brethren in Christ." The founder of this sect is Rev. William Gehman, who was born in Berks County, Pa., and began life as a farmer near Allentown. For eight years he was a preacher in the Old Mennonite church, also known as the Oberholtzer Mennonites, and who had separated from the main body of Mennonites in this country. Around the middle of the century, Rev. Gehman, and several other Oberholtzer Mennonites, withdrew from their organization, and in 1853, began still another Mennonite organization. The official name which this new organization assumed was "The Evangelical Mennonite Association," while the term "new Mennonites" was the one popularly applied



to them. In 1879, the name was changed to "Mennonite Brethren in Christ."

Their church policy was at first patterned after that of the church from which they came, but they become more and more Methodist in their doctrines as the years went by, and gradually they adopted the Methodist form of church government as exemplified then in the Evangelical churches. Mr. H. H. Romig, in a contributed article on this sect in the *Lehigh County Anniversary History*, summarizes them in these words: "These Mennonites are a very strict, honest and zealous people; observe feet washing and are opposed to war, infant baptisms, and secret societies. \* \* \* They have introduced some new methods of work by sustaining, in addition to the regular work, two separate departments, known as "Gospel Heralds" and "Gospel Workers," the former consisting of men, the latter of women. They wear uniforms and preach and perform deeds of love in a way similar to that of the Salvation Army." <sup>28</sup>

In 1886, certain members of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ began to hold meetings in a private home, with a view of establishing a congregation in the city. These meetings were continued for three years, then, in 1889, they succeeded in erecting a small frame chapel on Gordon street, above Eighth. There were 13 active members in the newly formed congregation.

The Swedenborgian, or New Jerusalem Church, was another which gained a foothold during this period. There were believers of this faith in the city as early as 1830, but it was not until the winter of 1869 that a formal organization was formed. The following year, 1870, Rev. L. H. Tafel, of Philadelphia, began to conduct services.

In these early days, the services attracted large audiences. Many older residents bear their testimony to this fact. "In 1883, the society severed its connection with the Pennsylvania Association, and Rev. Schreck, upon his ordination, became the regular pastor. Then there were about seventy members in Allentown, and additional members in the county districts."

It was not possible to find out the exact membership for the year 1890. A number of older inhabitants, all of

<sup>28</sup> Cf. *Supra.*, p. 548.

whom were members of the congregation, were consulted. It would seem that 200 would be a fair estimate as the church membership for that year.

“Another body of Christians widely spread in Pennsylvania is the Church of God, sometimes called Winebrennerians from the founder, John Winebrenner. He is a minister of the Reformed church, and settled in Harrisburg in 1820, where a revival soon broke out under his preaching. This being regarded as an innovation in the customs of the Reformed church, Winebrenner met so strong an opposition that the doors of his church were closed against him, and about the year 1825 he was forced to separate from his denomination. His preaching was heard by great numbers of Germans, and in 1829 a regular organization was established. Owing to their doctrine of immersion they are classed with the Baptists. The polity of the Church of God, however, is Methodistic in some respects . . . ”<sup>29</sup>

This denomination made its advent into the city during the years immediately before 1890. The exact date of its local appearance could not be discovered, but it is known that the organization was in such shape that building operations were begun in 1890. This congregation is known in the city as the German Baptist Church, and its membership in 1890 is estimated at 20.

While this study is concerned chiefly with the Protestant churches in Allentown, it is necessary to sketch the entire field, in order that our conception of Protestantism may gain the proper relative proportions. This demands a brief summary of the non-Protestant groupings of a religious nature, formed during the forty years following the middle of the last century.

It has already been intimated that there were persons of the Catholic faith, residing in this vicinity, as early as the seventh decade of the 18th century. The number of Roman Catholics in Allentown and vicinity, prior to the nineteenth century, was limited. Such few as did locate here were ministered unto until far down in the 19th century by Jesuit Fathers from Berks County.

In 1856, ground was bought on Ridge Avenue and Allen street, and the same year building operations on

<sup>29</sup> Kuhns, *supra.*, pp. 191 and 192.

the first Roman Catholic church were begun. It was dedicated in 1857, and the name given to this initial appearance of organized Catholicism was "The Church of the Immaculate Conception." Thirty-six members comprised the congregation, all of whom were Germans.

Catholics of Irish extraction are soon heard of, and one hears of Irish and German Catholics worshipping together in peace. This most extraordinary combination was short-lived, for in 1866, a "serious disagreement occurred on St. Patrick's Day, between the Irish and the German members." Both elements hereafter followed their separate functions. The church building passed from the German element to the Irish faction, via a sheriff's sale, and the church of the Immaculate Conception has been the church of the Irish, and later of the English, Catholics to the present day.

After several years of worship in a frame structure, the German element was taken in charge by Rev. Edward F. Prendergast, who was for years the archbishop of the province of Philadelphia. A lot was purchased at Fourth and Pine streets, and in 1870, the "Sacred Heart of Jesus Church" was dedicated. This has since that time been the material representation of German Catholicism, and has been, and is, spoken of in popular parlance as "the German Catholic Church."

An effort was made to find out the Catholic membership in 1890. This, it was impossible to do. Monsignor Peter Masson most kindly looked up the old records, but could find no reports going back further than 1897. A total of 2,450 souls were reported for that year.

Recourse, accordingly, must be had to estimates. It has been noted that there were 36 souls, of Roman Catholic faith, affiliated with the church in 1857. Forty years later, the number was 2,450. Assuming an even and regular growth of membership each year during this forty-year period, it would mean about 60 accessions a year. On the basis of this figure, the Roman Catholic churches would have gained a total of 420 souls since 1890. It would therefore seem to be fair to say that the total number of souls belonging to the two Roman Catholic churches in 1890 was about 2,000.

In the following chapter, it will be shown that the adult membership, or perhaps it would be better to say the confirmed membership, equals about 70 per cent of the total number of souls enumerated. Presuming to take this percentage, it would seem that there were about 1,400 confirmed Roman Catholics affiliated with the city churches in 1890. This figure, of course, lacks the exactness of most of the other data given. But it is believed to be very close to the truth.

To summarize now, there were in Allentown in 1890 a total of 25 church organizations. Their total membership was 9,118. These churches with their membership fall somewhat naturally, from a number of angles, into definite groups.

In the first place, there are the Reformed and Lutheran churches. These two denominations were composed mainly of Pennsylvania Germans and their descendants. These churches are the formal churches, those less tinged by the emotionalism that characterized the religious history of the Pennsylvania Germans as a whole. In 1890, 10 out of the 25 formal religious organizations in the city were Lutheran or Reformed. Their total membership was 5,024, or 55 per cent of the total church membership of the city.

On the other hand, it is significant to note that those peculiarly pietistic sects which were so important in the early stream of German immigration into the state are virtually unrepresented in the city. In 1886, a reform branch of the Mennonite church began a local existence, but by 1890, the Mennonite Brethren in Christ had but 13 members.

There is a group of so-called "English" churches, which gained a foothold in the city between 1830 and 1890, most of them however dating after the middle of the century. These churches were the Presbyterian, the Methodist, the Episcopal, the Baptist and the Swedenborgian. By 1890, 7 out of the 25 churches were of this general type, having a total of 1,228 members. This was 13 per cent of the church membership of the city.

The pietistic influence was by no means dead among the Germans, as far as its manifestations in the city were concerned. The stream of emotional religion which gain-

ed such great strength among the Germans, followed thru new channels which culminated in the organization and extension of new denominations. Most of the new denominations were influenced to a marked degree by the principles and polity of Methodism. In fact, the churches of this category, such as the Evangelical, the United Brethren in Christ, and the German Baptists, were, especially during their earlier days, little more than Pennsylvania German editions of Methodism. By 1890, there were six churches in Allentown in representation of this phase of religious development, having a membership of 1,453, or almost 16 per cent of the total church membership of the city.

Finally, there was the Roman Catholic element, with two churches and about 1,400 estimated membership, mostly of later settlers of German and Irish extraction.

## CHAPTER III.

### A STUDY OF THE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP OF ALLENTOWN IN 1917.

In the preceding chapters, the municipal background to date, and the denominational background to 1890, have been sketched. No effort at completeness or originality was made, but simply a summary of what was considered essential to bring the city and its denominational past before the reader, with enough definiteness to understand properly what remains to be offered. In the case of the latter, the year 1890 was selected, because it is perhaps the best arbitrary point to fix for the beginning of that development of the city which, in the twenty-seven years that have elapsed since, has carried it far on the road toward industrial, civic and numerical importance. Accordingly, this period, i. e., the period since 1890, has been left for more thorough study in a later chapter.

One may now state the first group of major questions which this study plans to answer. There are three questions in this group. They are: First, what is the present (spring 1917) church membership of the city; second, how does it compare with the population of the city; and third, what is the numerical strength of the various sects and groupings of sects? It is proposed in this chapter to deal with each of these questions in turn, giving such data as it has been possible to obtain, noting their value and defects, and venturing some selection of data.

Before proceeding to the answer of these questions, it is necessary to consider certain objections and problems that immediately are apparent.

To begin with, while the study was in progress, a great deal of criticism was directed against it from certain quarters. Most of the critics were ministers included in the study. The burden of the antagonism resolved itself, in its final form, to this: "You cannot measure

the religious life of the city by compiling statistics." "The religious nature of a city does not yield to the use of a yard stick or measuring tape."

A complete admission of these statements must of course be made by any thinking man. Hearts cannot be read. The religious temperature of people cannot be measured by any thermometer as yet devised by statistical genius. No man can take a census of the Christians in this or any other city. Numerical standards are insufficient where spiritual values are to be estimated. There may be more spiritual intensity in a meeting, and more ethical result of it, where "two or three are gathered together," than when seeming worshippers gather by the hundreds. As an English writer has remarked: "Emphatically let it be said here, put not your trust in figures. The moral significance of a subscription list may be in inverse ratio to its worth in pounds sterling; still the poor widow's mites outweigh the superfluity of the rich."<sup>1</sup> Rev. Harry F. Ward has similarly stated the inability to measure religious conditions. He says: "What then is a religious community? It is not a community that is full of churches, each seeking its own sectarian development, each cultivating its own peculiar formulas and practise. It is rather a community which has become aware of its organic nature, which has found its soul, repented of its sins, come to conscious realization of its powers and needs, and is co-ordinating its forces, including its churches, in harmony with a power greater than itself for the working out of its salvation."<sup>2</sup>

Despite this admitted limitation, it is believed that an enumeration of church membership has its value. From the earliest days, the statistician has had his place in organized Christianity. St. Luke was the first of the guild when he counted "about a hundred and twenty"<sup>3</sup> in the assembly that chose Matthias instead of Judas.

Similarly, he records that "about three thousand souls"<sup>4</sup> were added to their number at the great Pentecost. Certainly such figures give us a more definite mental picture of the origins of the Church. And as Carter

<sup>1</sup> Carter, "The Church and the New Age." p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Ward, "Social Evangelism." p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Acts i. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Acts ii. 41.

has said: "There is one gain from statistics. Within the limited area of church life in which they have validity, they help us to set the Church as an organized body against the background of the times, and to judge—as far as judgment can be passed by us—whether her hold on life is stronger or weaker. To a certain extent they do register the Church's grip of the age."<sup>5</sup>

Fully admitting therefore all possible limitations, the data were gathered, not in the hope of measuring the religious condition of the city, but with the belief that from a knowledge, based on fact, of the number of people who have formed connections with ecclesiastical organizations, some idea could be formed of the grip which the church, as a concrete, tangible, visible organization, has upon the population of the city. Only this is claimed, and nothing more.

A second question that may properly be raised is this: Is Allentown a representative community? Is the particular locality a fair one upon which to draw any conclusions of more than local significance?

To these questions no unqualified answer can be given. In a sense, one can say yes; in another sense, one must say no. In many ways Allentown is a typical inland city, prosperous, busy, newly rich, newly grown—one of those typical American industrial centers which have, in the last few decades, sprung up all over the United States. It can, with relative truthfulness, be said that Allentown has all the vices and virtues of a new industrial center, i. e., relatively new. It is hard to compare cities. There are so many subjective difficulties, and one's number of cities to be compared must necessarily be so limited.

On the other hand, Allentown is, in a way, a peculiar community. It has a larger proportion of people, native born of native parents, than many other cities of corresponding size. Historically, and to an extent traditionally, it is a Pennsylvania German community. And the Pennsylvania German has always been characterized, as has been noted, by a strong sense of piety. Every boy or girl in the typical Pennsylvania German household must be confirmed or converted. It is an event

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<sup>5</sup> Carter, *op. cit.* p. 15.



which, like baptism and marriage, punctuates the routine of almost every individual's life. It is a badge of respectability. Membership in a church, or lack of it, designates the "good boy" and "good girl," or the reverse. Whatever the sleek, complacent Pennsylvania German may think of the church and the preacher, John and Mary must "go to the preacher" for catechetical instruction when they arrive at a certain age. They may not want to, like to, but go they must. It is one of those things which a well-regulated household demands. This is, of course, true of many other elements in our population. The Pennsylvania German is peculiar in the sense that this feeling is more marked and more intense. While Allentown has been tearing away from its traditional moorings, nevertheless, the extent to which her citizens are still influenced by the Pennsylvania German atmosphere and customs, this one, among others, holds. To the extent that Allentown remains a Pennsylvania German town, this tendency characterizes her people, just as it does a number of other Pennsylvania German towns dotting eastern Pennsylvania.

The third question that may be raised has to do with the manner in which the data were collected. In answer to this, it may be said that in the great majority of cases, they were gathered by personal visits. Most of the ministers in the city were interviewed, church records in certain cases were examined, in other cases pastoral reports were gone over, and in the majority of cases synodical and conference reports were utilized. In the greater number of cases, these three sources were available, and wherever possible, they were compared. The attitude of most of the ministers towards the writer was cordial. A few there were who showed personal antagonism. Several more seemed unduly suspicious, demanding the fullest particulars regarding the use to which the data were to be put before they consented to give what was asked for. The majority, however, went to such inconvenience as was necessary, and with cheerful willingness. Many thanks are due to these pastors, without whose co-operation the study would have been impossible. In many cases, matters were exceedingly simplified by virtue of the fact that the United States Census was requiring, at the time, a report from all of the churches, one of the

questions being asked by the Census bureau authorities was the membership of the organization at that time. This enabled, especially in regard to the Catholic churches, an accuracy of data otherwise perhaps impossible.

Another matter that needs settlement at this point is the determination of the statistical unit. Every statistical study, if properly done, must define its unit of measure. A study may, for instance, speak of farms, but unless one knows just what is included in the term farm as used therein, it is at once open to criticism. Similarly, the Census may speak of families, but unless it is explained how hotels, boarding houses and roomers are listed, grave doubt arises at once concerning the value of the study. It becomes necessary therefore to fix definitely what is meant by the term church member.

It is not altogether easy to do this. Various denominations make different classifications. The Catholic churches, when asked for membership data, speak of so many souls in the parish, including all baptized persons connected with the church. The Lutheran churches make a three-fold classification: baptized members, confirmed members, and communicant members. The Reformed churches mention communicant members and those that have communed during the year. The Evangelical, Presbyterian, Methodist, and a number of other denominations, speak only of members, making no distinction, except perhaps between resident and non-resident members.

As the study proceeded however, and one discussed the matter with various pastors, it became possible to evolve a common denominator. The confirmed Lutherans, the communicant Reformed and Episcopalians, and the members of the other Protestant churches were found to be about the same thing in each case.

In the case of the Catholic churches, the problem was not solved so easily. Here it was necessary to make estimates. In the case of only one Catholic church, was it possible to obtain the number of confirmed members distinct from the baptized membership. The number of confirmed members amounted to seventy per cent of the baptized membership. In turning to the Protestant denominations where baptized and confirmed memberships were given, it was found that the confirmed members

ranged at from sixty-six to seventy per cent of the total baptized membership. It was therefore finally decided to estimate the confirmed membership of the Catholic churches at seventy per cent of the total baptized membership. This met with the approval of Monsignor Peter Masson, Vicar General of the local diocese, who knows the local situation very thoroughly. While not wholly accurate, such a result is a scientific approximation, near enough to the real number, one is led to feel, to prevent any misgivings as to the general value of the estimated result. This result obtained compares with the Protestant membership as above stated.

It may be said then that the term church member, used as the unit of measure throughout this study, means one who has been admitted to membership in some religious organization in the city, maintaining that membership by the payment of dues and the meeting of other formal obligations and requirements, sufficiently at least to be carried on the roll of the organization. Children or adults who have not been confirmed, converted, "saved," or made some formal confession of faith or purpose, or bringing, by letter of transfer or other prescribed method, a proof that this had been done elsewhere, are not listed as members by the various organizations, and are of course not included in the count of members.

We are now perhaps in a position to address ourselves to the first question with which this study deals. What is the present (1917) church membership of the city, and how does that membership compare with the population? As previously indicated, the position is not taken that the total membership is an exact measure of the religious forces of the community, or an indication of the number of consecrated citizens. On the other hand, however, there has been so much discussion concerning the strength of the church in the modern city, its importance as an institution, etc., that it is believed that value is to be attached to the data as a measure of the tangible hold which the church as an institution has upon the city's population. In other words, just what proportion of the people in this city are formally connected with a religious organization? How many support the church by being a tangible part of it? How many people are interested enough in its work to pass through the

formal requirements and maintain the formal obligations of membership in it?

There were in the city, in the spring of 1917, a total of 64 formal church organizations known to the writer. No doubt there are one or two in addition, but their numerical importance, if such there be, is insignificant. Of the 64, there are 52 which maintain some aspect of the Protestant faith; 8 are Catholic, including two which are spoken of as Greek Catholic, but which recognize the leadership of the Roman pontiff; one is Greek orthodox; and three are Jewish synagogues. Several religious organizations sprang into existence during the fall of the year 1917, but none was included in the study which had not existed prior to June 1st, 1917. A line had to be drawn somewhere. Inasmuch as the church year of all denominations ended prior to that date, it was decided that the first of June was a fair date to fix, beyond which no data of any kind should be included.

Of the 52 Protestant organizations, membership data were secured from every one. The figures represent, in the majority of cases, the report of the congregation to the district denominational organization, such as conference, synod or classis. In most cases, the reports denote the total membership in the spring of the year, some time between February and May. In the case of the General Synod Lutherans, United Brethren, and Mennonite Brethren in Christ, the 1916 reports were used. In these denominations, the annual report to the general body of the church is made in October. Accordingly, the 1916 reports were taken, since the 1917 reports would have necessitated a stepping over the line of finality, established at June 1st. The total membership of these 52 Protestant organizations, in 1917, was 21,193.

Turning to the Catholic churches, of which there were 8, the combined adult membership, on the basis of a 70 per cent estimate of the number of baptized persons reported, was 11,344. Fortunately, while the study was in progress, the United States census sent out a general inquiry as to membership of churches. To answer this government inquiry, all of the Catholic churches in the city took a census of their membership. The figures obtained and sent to the census office at Washington were those given to the writer.

There is in Allentown, one Greek orthodox church. Its membership of confirmed persons in 1917 was 63. This is the figure given by the father.

The three Jewish organizations in existence at the time the study was made reported a total membership of 201. There are many more Hebrews in the city, but 201 is the sum total of members reported by the rabbis.

The total church membership of the entire city, in the spring of 1917, was 32,801. It is one's firm conviction that this figure is very nearly correct. Certainly a hundred or two would cover any inaccuracies, and a hundred or two would affect the general total to a small degree.

This membership total is, however, open to one other criticism, and that is that there are many church members, who, while living in the city and probably worshipping in most cases in the city's churches, do not maintain a formal connection with any congregation in the city. It is undoubtedly true that there are many such. It was pointed out in the first chapter that a large part of the city's population had been recruited from the adjacent rural districts. Acquaintance with the church situation in this city enables one to know that the smaller annual dues in vogue in the rural churches have been largely responsible for this condition. For the magnificent sum of perhaps one dollar a year, it is quite within the range of possibility to retain membership in a nearby rural congregation, with the privilege of quarterly communion and burial in the adjoining cemetery. Coupled with this fact, as a partial explanation, is the natural inertia of certain Allentonians in such matters.

How large the number of these is can only be estimated. Various clergymen and laymen, who are in a position to know the situation, were asked to make estimates. Their estimates range between three and ten thousand. The highest estimates were from Lutheran sources, somewhat unmindful of the fact that the large number estimated was a powerful indictment against their own aggressiveness and industriousness in the vineyard.

While it is perfectly true that this element must be recognized in any study of church membership, there is another element, generally overlooked, which tends to, and perhaps entirely does, overbalance it. That is the fact

that many city churches carry members on their membership rolls who do not live in the city. There is a large population which, fringe-like, surrounds the city, but which is not included in an enumeration of the city's population. Many of these are members of churches in the city. To gain some idea of their numerical significance, a detailed examination was made of the membership rolls of three congregations. One of the congregations was a large one, with a membership of almost 1,500; the second one was medium-sized, with almost 500 members; while the third one had but a few more than a hundred. The percentages of non-resident members carried on the rolls and included in the official membership reports of these three churches were 9, 14.5 and 35, respectively. The first and second seem to be typical of the average congregations of steady growth; the latter represents the condition in churches which shoot up very rapidly, without actually assimilating their membership. The pastor of the latter church confessed that among the names on his membership roll were those of residents of towns round about the city which had been added by his predecessor, but whom he himself had never seen. If 15 per cent of the membership of the churches of the city be a fair estimate to cover those members not residing within the limits of the city, the number would be about 5,000. Such a number would probably counterbalance the number of church members living within the city, but maintaining formal connection with some organization elsewhere. The difference, if any, is apt to be small.

Accepting the total of 32,801 as approximately correct, how does this compare with the population of the city. Obviously, a comparison with the total population would be unfair, for the church membership arrived at does not include baptized persons, most of whom are children. It is evident that the church membership must be compared with the population over a certain age limit. What age limit shall be taken? Here is a real difficulty. The canonical age for confirmation in the churches of the Catholic faith is 12 years. The customary age in the Reformed and Lutheran churches ranges from 14 to 17 years. On the other hand, there are certain Protestant sects which are replenished with more youthful additions,

embracing those who undergo the remarkable transformation known as conversion at a startling age.

Among the age classifications which the census makes, two lend themselves to possible use in this connection. One may take the population ten years of age and over, or the population fifteen years of age and over.

The population of Allentown in 1910 was 51,913. According to the census, 41,863 were ten years of age and over, while 37,679 were fifteen years of age and over. The population in 1917 was estimated by the writer at 75,684. If the age classification remained the same, there would have been in Allentown in 1917, 61,001 people ten years of age and over, and 54,946 people fifteen years of age and over. If the part of the population which the ammunition work has brought into the city is preponderantly an adult population, these figures are under-estimates. For safety's sake, one is willing to accept the under-estimate.

Taking the total church membership, and comparing it with these figures, one finds that it equals 53.77 per cent of the population ten years of age and over, and 59.7 per cent of the population fifteen years of age and over. It would seem therefore in summary that somewhere between one-half and three-fifths of the city's population, past the age where formal church membership is assumed, is really enrolled within the church membership.

Turning to the third matter to be discussed in this chapter, let us note the denominational make-up of these 32,801 members. The Protestant membership has been given at 21,193. This amounts to almost 66 per cent of the total membership of the city. As a general statement, one may say that two-thirds of the church membership of Allentown is Protestant in its faith and connection.

The membership of the Catholic churches, Roman and Greek, was given at 11,344. This is a bit more than 34 per cent of the city's total membership. The fractional percentage, lying between the two main classifications of Protestant and Catholic, embraces the Jewish and Greek orthodox elements. Allentown therefore is predominantly Protestant, and it is largely with this element that the remainder of our study will deal.

Turning to the Protestant group, let us examine it a bit more in detail. The membership data of the various denominations follows:

Denomination.	Number.	Year.
Reformed	7,355	1917
Lutheran (General Council)	5,036	1917
Lutheran (General Synod)	1,784	1916
United Evangelical	2,217	1917
Evangelical Association	863	1917
Methodist Episcopal	698	1917
Presbyterian	674	1917
Episcopal	586	1917
German Baptist	427	1916
United Brethren	414	1916
Mennonite Brethren in Christ	399	1916
Baptist	344	1916
First Mennonite	95	1917
Gospel Chapel	61	1917
Zion New Reformed	45	1917
First Brethren	41	1917
African Methodist Episcopal	40	1917
Christian Science	35	1917
Free Methodist	26	1917
Swedenborgian	21	1917
Pentecostal Rescue Mission	17	1917
Missionary Alliance	15	1917

It will be seen, from the foregoing data, that the Reformed church is, numerically speaking, the strongest in the city. The membership in 1917 was 7,355. This amounts to 34.7 per cent of the total Protestant membership, and 22.4 per cent of the total church membership of the city. In other words, a liberal one-third of Protestantism in Allentown is Reformed in its allegiance, and a bit more than one-fifth of the total membership of the city adheres to that brand of orthodoxy.

Taking the two branches of the Lutheran church together (they have united formally since June 1st, 1917), it appears that the total Lutheran membership is 6,820. This is the second largest denomination in the city. Their total number forms 32.1 per cent of the Protestant membership, and 20.8 of the entire membership. The difference in the numerical strength between the Reformed and Lutheran churches is not great, being but 535 in 1917.

It will be remembered that Allentown was originally a Reformed and Lutheran settlement. It is interesting, therefore, to note the extent of historical continuity in this respect. Taking these two denominations and adding them together, the total (14,175) amounts to 66.8 per



cent of the Protestant strength and 43.2 per cent of the total membership in the city.

It will be recalled, too, that the Evangelical church arose and developed as a movement of reformation and protest against the formalism and conservatism of the Reformed and Lutheran churches. The combined membership of the two branches of this denomination (the dual organization referred to is the result of a factional fight in the nineties) was 3,080 in 1917. This amounted to 14.5 per cent of the Protestant total, and 9.3 per cent of the city's total. If this element, based originally upon an attitude of protest, be added to the Reformed and Lutheran strength, it will be found that the total amounts to 81.3 per cent of the total number of Protestants, and 52.5 per cent of the total number of church members for the city.

An interesting point to be noted is the numerical weakness of the Methodist and Baptist churches. These two denominations, of the largest in the country as a whole, form, when taken together, but 4.9 per cent of the total number of Allentown Protestants and but 3.1 per cent of the total number of church members. This relative proportion, between the Reformed and Lutherans on the one hand, and the Methodists and Baptists on the other hand, is of course due to the German origin and background of the city.

Summarizing the chapter, it has been shown that the total church membership of Allentown is 32,801, which is somewhere between one-half and three-fifths of the population of the city eligible on the basis of age to church membership. It has been shown that about two-thirds of this membership is of the Protestant faith, and about one-third is Catholic, with Jews and Greek orthodox of small numerical significance. It has been shown, with regard to the Protestant membership, that it is largely Reformed and Lutheran, a fact easily explained in view of the trend of the first two chapters.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE MOVEMENT OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP SINCE 1890.

In the preceding chapter, an effort was made to ascertain, as accurately as possible, the number of church members in the city of Allentown. The figure obtained was contrasted with the total population past certain ages. It is believed that the percentage derived indicates very closely the proportion of residents of the city who are affiliated with formal religious organizations.

The important thing for the student of social science, however, is not simply the numerical strength of the church in any given year, but the movement of growth or decline over a number of years which a comparative study reveals.

The statement has been made again and again during the past years that the church is declining in numbers, that it is losing its grip upon the masses of the people. Although written a number of years ago, several sentences from the right reverend Charles D. Williams' article on "The Conflict Between Religion and the Church," published in the June, 1911, number of *The American Magazine*, may be quoted here as summarizing popular impression on the matter. Speaking of the church, Bishop Williams says: "It is losing in many ways. It is losing in numbers. \* \* \* It is not keeping step in membership with the enormous growth of population in our cities. It is losing hold on the masses and classes alike."

During the last eight or ten years, the writer has held an intense interest in this question. It was discussed with laymen and clergymen alike. Everywhere, with practical unanimity, was the thought held, sometimes expressed, sometimes implied, sometimes conveyed despite verbal denials, that the church was, numerically and in the matter of influence, a diminishing factor in our American civilization. Within the past few years, a rather general sentiment seemed to prevail that we were in the midst of a more or less definite religious revival

or awakening, yet to most men that revival or awakening was not confined to the church, or really within the church, but was rather in that vague twilight zone outside of the formal church organization.

What it is proposed to do in this chapter is to trace the movement of church membership in this one city over a period of 27 years, a period of rapid growth of population, a period of increasingly intense industrialism, a period of economic transition. It is, more specifically speaking, the purpose of this chapter to attempt an answer to some of the following questions: Has the total church membership of Allentown grown as rapidly as the population? Has the Protestant church grown as rapidly as the population? Has the Catholic church? How do these two branches of Christendom compare with each other as to growth during these years? The writer knows of no such study having been made, and believes this to be of value in revealing a general tendency among at least the Pennsylvania German element, of which Allentown is typical.

The first question to be considered is: Has the total church membership of the city increased as rapidly as the city's population? In 1890, the total church membership was, as previously stated, 9,118. The total population of the city, according to the census for 1890, was 25,228. The population, fifteen years of age and over, by the same authority, was 17,418. The church membership, therefore, amounted to 36.1 per cent of the total population, and 52.3 per cent of the population fifteen years of age and over.

In 1917, the total church membership was 32,801. The total population of the city was conservatively estimated at 75,684. The population, fifteen years of age and over, was also conservatively placed at 54,946. The church membership therefore amounted to 43.3 per cent of the total population, and 59.7 per cent of the population fifteen years of age and over.

The matter can be approached from another angle. The increase of population from 1890 to 1917 was 200 per cent. The increase of population, fifteen years of age and over, during the same period was 215 per cent. The increase of church membership during the same years amounted to 259 per cent.

These comparisons justify at least one conclusion, and that is that the church in Allentown is not losing its grip as far as formal church membership is concerned. Making allowance for the fact that the estimate of population may be too low, and allowing for an increase in the proportion of the city's population which people over fifteen years of age form (due to the influx of industrial workers within the last three or four years), it is nevertheless evident that the church has been holding its own during these twenty-seven years, and has possibly increased its grip upon the masses of the city.

The next question to arise is this: What are the respective roles which the two great branches of Christendom have played in this movement? The data are available for the comparison necessary to answer this question. Let us look first of all at the Protestant churches. Following is a table showing the population, fifteen years of age and over, for the years 1890, 1900, 1910 and 1917, as well as the Protestant church membership in the same years. The year 1890 is used as the statistical base.

Year	Population 15 Yrs. of age and over	Percentage	Protestant membership	Percentage
1890	17,418	100.	7,718	100.
1900	25,198	144.	10,497	136.
1910	37,679	216.	16,333	211.
1917	54,946	315.	21,193	274.

On the basis of these data, it would appear that only one conclusion could be drawn, and that would be that the Protestant church membership had not kept pace with the growth of population during this twenty-seven year period. The table given above plainly shows that the population, fifteen years of age and over, has increased 41 per cent more than the Protestant church membership during the period under consideration. Remembering however that the total church membership was shown to have grown more rapidly than the population of the city, it is also very evident that one must look elsewhere than to the Protestant church for the explanation.

Let us turn then to the churches of the Catholic faith. At the close of the second chapter, the Catholic membership, i. e., for confirmed members was estimated at 1,400. It was admitted that this figure is not totally accurate, but there is every reason to believe that it is

near enough so, that one need feel no hesitancy in taking that figure for the purposes of our discussion.

The confirmed membership of the Roman Catholic churches in 1917 was given at 10,084. The membership for the two Greek Catholic churches in the same year was 1,260. From the standpoint of our purpose, there is no reason for maintaining the distinction. It may be said then that the Catholic church membership in 1917 was 11,344. This, as previously indicated, amounts to 70 per cent of the total number of baptized persons enumerated as belonging to the Catholic churches in 1917. The confirmed Catholic church membership in 1917 was, therefore, 8.103 times that in 1890. In other words, the increase of membership during the twenty-seven year period under consideration was 710.3 per cent, as against a gain of 215 per cent in the population, fifteen years of age and over, and a gain of 174 per cent in the Protestant church membership.

Just what does this mean? Does it mean, perchance, that the city of Allentown is being converted from Protestantism to Catholicism? It does not. The explanation for this fact is evident to any person who knows the city and stops to analyze the situation.

To begin with, the eight Catholic churches are all in the lower, or eastern part of the city, east of Fourth street. Every one is included in the zone, described in the first chapter as embracing virtually four out of every five of the foreign born and native born of foreign parents. It is among the foreign stock that the Catholic churches work almost exclusively. The Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a Roman Catholic church, has a membership made up almost exclusively of German, Austrian and Hungarian stocks. In a letter to the writer, dated September 12th, 1917, Monsignor Peter Masson, the priest in charge, states that the growth of his parish, numerically speaking, since 1897, has been due very largely to the immigration from Hungary. The Church of the Immaculate Conception embraces, for the most part, the older foreign stock, from the standpoint of residence in the city, with an especially large Irish following. The Church of St. Peter and St. Paul was established in 1912, and the 567 souls in the parish in 1917 are almost exclusively Polish. The Church of Our Lady of

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Mount Carmel is the Italian Catholic church. It was established in 1911, and had 3,000 souls enumerated in the parish in 1917. The Slavonian element in the city organized a congregation in 1907, and ten years later the Church of St. John The Baptist had 1,440 souls. More recently, the Magyars formed a separate congregation, and St. Stephen's Catholic Church had a membership of 847 souls in 1917. There are also two Greek Catholic churches, St. Mary's and St. Michael's, having a combined membership, baptized, of 1800 souls in 1917.

Appreciating then the fact that the Catholic congregations are almost exclusively made up of the foreign stock of the city, it becomes pertinent to consider what change has taken place with reference to the number of the foreign stock in the city during the period under consideration.

The census of 1890 gives the number of foreign born in the city of Allentown as 2,045. Of these, 1,776 were fifteen years of age and over. In 1910, the number of foreign born according to the census was 6,234. The number fifteen year of age and over was 5,891. The increase for the two decades was 231.1 per cent.

The number of foreign born in 1917 is not known. It is evident however that it is much larger than in 1910. The immigration into the United States from 1910 to 1914, the year of the outbreak of the war, was very large. Any one who is familiar with the city of Allentown knows that this city gained its full share of this immigrant stream. Four of the eight Catholic churches in the city have been established since 1910. Two of the four previously established have gained most of their membership since that date. St. Mary's Ruthenian Greek Catholic Church is an excellent example. In 1908, when this congregation was organized, the baptized membership was 160 souls. In 1917, there were 1,200 souls. Or, one may refer to the Italian Catholic Church. The congregation of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel was organized in 1911. The enumeration of 1917 reported 3,000 souls in the parish.

Moreover, an increasing percentage of the native born of foreign or mixed parentage must be considered as among the Catholic element in the population. The older population of this classification, in 1890, was per-

haps largely Protestant, but during the last decade in the 19th century, there began the arrival of the Catholic South-Europeans, whose descendants now fall into the category of native born of foreign parents, and who retain their Catholic allegiance.

The total number of baptized persons reported as belonging to the Roman and Greek Catholic churches in 1917 was 16,205. To this may be added 90 souls belonging to the one Greek Orthodox church, thus giving a total of 16,295 souls. This comes very near to being the total number of people in the city of Catholic faith. In 1910, the census gives the foreign born in the city as 6,234 and the native born of foreign or mixed parents as 7,172. It is evident therefore that, allowing for a liberal increase among the foreign born since 1910, and including a portion of the native born of foreign or mixed parentage, the Catholic membership, plus that of the small Greek Orthodox church, has kept pace with the increase in foreign stock in the city's population.

On the basis of the foregoing, the conclusion appears inevitable that the marked percentage of increase in the membership of the Catholic churches is due to the rapid increase of the foreign stock of Catholic faith. It means, too, in the last analysis, that the Catholic church is retaining its hold, as far as the situation in Allentown is concerned, upon the foreign element after the transition from the old world to the new has been effected.

Let us now return to the Protestant church membership. It has been noted that the Protestant membership did not increase so rapidly as the population, fifteen years of age and over, during the period since 1890. It was also noted that the Catholic membership increased much more rapidly. This latter fact was explained as being due to the increase in the number of immigrant stock of Catholic faith. It would seem fair therefore to compare the Protestant membership, not with the growth of the population of the city as a whole, but with the growth of the native element. It is not implied that the Protestant churches are exclusively membered by native born stock. But the greater part of the Protestant strength is among the native element. Virtually all the Protestant churches are located in that part of the city where the native born of native parents are seg-

regated. Only three Protestant churches, out of the total of fifty-two, are located east of Fourth street.

There is no way of knowing the native born population in 1917. Our comparison must consequently be confined to the period from 1890 to 1910. The question is raised here whether the Protestant church membership during these twenty years has increased as rapidly as the native born of native parents. Let us see.

In 1890, the population, fifteen years of age and over, that was native born of native parents, amounted, according to the United States census, to 13,809. The native born of native parents in 1910 in the city are given at 27,158. The increase for this twenty-year period is almost 100 per cent. During the same period, the Protestant church membership, according to the table previously given in this chapter, increased 111 per cent.

While it was admitted that the Protestant membership included also a part of the native born of foreign or mixed parents, and it would seem a small part of the foreign born, nevertheless, the above comparison would indicate that as far as the native born of native parents are concerned, who make up the greater part of the Protestant strength, the Protestant churches have kept pace in their membership with the increase in number in this element during the period from 1890 to 1910. In fact, church membership increased 11 per cent more in these two decades than the native born of native parents.

The real truth of the matter seems to be therefore that the Protestant churches have not been declining in their hold upon that element of the city which is their own, have not been losing ground, but have maintained their hold during the period under consideration. Similarly, the Catholic church has retained its hold upon its people during the period, despite the effects of a transition which completely changed their entire life and outlook upon it. In Allentown at least, the church is not losing ground, is not losing its hold upon the classes and masses alike, but is retaining its traditional hold upon the people—at least as far as formal connection with the organization of the church is concerned.

This conclusion is directly opposite to what virtually everyone in the city, with whom the matter was discussed, expected. With a very few exceptions, those persons



who knew of this study expected a rather dark and pessimistic conclusion regarding the church's growth. Nevertheless, facts are facts, and these facts stand as a rebuke to an assumption based on insufficient knowledge.

As an impartial observer and student of the church, one cannot but gain, at least as far as this city is concerned, several impressions regarding the popular attitude towards the church. In the first place, there is some heckling of the church which is not altogether justified. Certain "candid" critics go about drawing a very pessimistic picture regarding its future, wearing withal an air which tries to say: "This hurts me as much as it does you, but I feel that it is my duty to do it." There is a naively keen delight in certain quarters in twisting the ecclesiastical lion's tail, regardless of the apologetic air which the twister may assume. Undoubtedly, some twisting of his tail is necessary from time to time to startle him into wakefulness and activity. But the twisting here referred to is that which concerns itself chiefly in seeing how cleverly the twist can be drawn, and what weird grimaces the lion makes under such treatment.

Then, too, one finds with reference to the church that same popular philosophy which one encounters in the discussion of any social problem. That is the philosophy or tendency which can be summed up in the phrase: "Alas, the good old days." Each age is prone to picture the past as a golden age. Immigration is not what it used to be. The weather is not what it used to be. Children are not so well behaved as they once were. Sobriety is not what it was in the past. The church is not what it used to be, it is losing in numbers and in hold upon masses and classes alike. Alas, the good old church of our fathers. Alas, the pious Allentonians of the past century.

Herbert Spencer, in his book, "The Study of Sociology," a book which everyone should read before studying any social problem, refers directly to this very fallacy. "Those who have lately become conscious of certain facts are apt to suppose those facts have lately arisen. After a changed state of mind has made us observant of occurrences we were before indifferent to, there often results the belief that such occurrences are more common than they were. It happens so even with

accidents and diseases. Having lamed himself, a man is surprised to find how many lame people there are; and, becoming dyspeptic, he discovers that dyspepsia is much more frequent than he supposed when young. For a kindred reason he is prone to think that servants do not behave nearly so well as they did during his boyhood days: not remembering that in Shakespeare's days the service obtainable was similarly reprobated in comparison with 'the constant service of the antique world.' In like manner, now that he has sons to establish in life, he fancies that the difficulty of getting places is much greater than it used to be. As witnesses to social phenomena, men thus impressed by facts which did not before impress them, became perverters of evidence. Things they have suddenly recognized, they mistake for things which have suddenly come into existence; and so are led to regard as a growing evil or good, that which is very likely a diminishing evil or good."

Behind a vast amount of the current criticism of and pessimism regarding the church is the implicit and probably mistaken notion that the ecclesiastical situation used to be much better than it now is. A little reading of history would soon dispel this conviction. There are, for instance, the sermons of Hugh Latimer, in the 16th century. Under the date of 1548 is given this incident: "One of her neighbors met her in the street and said, 'Mistress, whither go ye?' 'Marry,' she said, 'I am going to St. Thomas of Acres, to the sermon; I could not sleep all this last night and I am now going hither. I have never failed of a good nap there.' " Or, are golf and automobiles vaunted now as the successful rivals of the preacher? Yet one questions how many bishops today could be reduced, like Latimer in 1549, to face a locked church, where he had been advertised to preach, and on the steps one villager saying, "Sir, this is a busy day with us, we cannot hear you; it is Robin Hood's day. The parish are gone abroad to gather for Robin Hood. I pray you hinder them not."

Similarly, in Pepys Diary, vintage of 1667, one reads: "Much discourse about the bad state of the church, and how the clergy are come to be men of no worth in this world; and as the world do now generally discourse, they must be reformed."

Well says the author of the book of Ecclesiastes: "Say not thou, what is the cause that the former days were better than these. For thou enquirest not wisely concerning this." The good old times and the good old church—twin illusions of limited human vision. In Allentown, at least, we have the assurance of knowing that the numerical hold which the church has upon the masses is as extensive today as it was twenty-eight years ago.

## CHAPTER V.

### CHURCH ATTENDANCE IN ALLENTOWN.

Reverting to the third chapter, it will be remembered that, in general terms, three out of every five people in the city fifteen years of age and over, maintain formal connection with some religious organization. It is one's belief that this figure represents, to a certain degree, the tangible hold which the church has upon the population of the city. Whatever may be the motive or motives of this three-fifths of the population, whether it be that they seek church membership as a matter of habit, as a badge of respectability, as an avenue of social advancement, as a means of worship, as a matter of thoughtless imitation, whatever it may be, they nevertheless hold the formal organization which is dedicated to the worship of God in enough veneration or awe or respect, to satisfy the formal requirements of membership.

There remains, however, another test. How many people attend divine worship? What proportion of the population actually comes, constantly and repeatedly, under the influence of the church?

Some five years ago, the writer became interested in the matter of church attendance. The question which insistently came to mind was this: How many people in this city go to church on a Sunday? Inquiries were made among the various pastors. One replied that church attendance is "very good," whatever that may mean; the second pronounced it "very poor"; a third was non-committal; a fourth was neutral.

Gradually the idea dawned that there was but one way to find out. That was by actual count. In a lecture delivered May 3, 1883, Lord Kelvin observed that "No real advance can be made in any branch of physical science until practical methods of numerical reckoning of phenomena are established."<sup>1</sup> Some sixteen years later Professor Henry W. Farnum asserted that,

<sup>1</sup> Lecture on "Electrical Units of Measurements" at the Institution of Civil Engineers, reported in *Nature*, vol. xxviii, p. 91.

“The same remark applies with equal pertinence to social science.” “We can make no advance until we can measure our phenomena in such a way as to be able to institute fair comparisons between different times, different places, different classes of individuals.”<sup>2</sup> Church attendance is a social phenomena, and until we have accurately gathered the data, our discussion of the matter is a structure built upon the sand of assumption.

The project of a census of church attendance in the city was broached to a class of college students, and they entered heartily into it. That was in 1912. The results obtained were so encouraging, from the standpoint of the statistical student, that it was decided to repeat the study in the spring of 1917, and on a more elaborate scale. Much had been learned by experience in the former study, and in the second study an effort was made to avoid the mistakes of the first attempt.

It becomes pertinent to declare the method pursued in making the study. The services of more than fifty students were enlisted. A church was assigned to each one. He was instructed to attend services for two or three Sundays, morning and evening, provided the aforesaid Sundays were days of fair weather. They were furthermore asked to count all the attendants, men, women and children. All young persons accompanied by adults were enumerated as children.

Meanwhile, unknown to the student, the writer, by virtue of long residence in the city, found it possible to interest a number of residents of the city in the study. Such an one, not acquainted with the particular student, visited the same church and for the same purpose. Some of these towns' folks were ushers in the churches, some were choir members, some were personal friends or relatives. An effort was made to arrange the schedule so that persons of assured reliability visited the larger churches.

With two reports for each service, from two persons unknown to each other, it was possible to check up the data. In quite a good many cases, there were slight differences between the two reports. In a few cases, there was a considerable variation. In these latter instances,

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<sup>2</sup> “Some Economic Aspects of the Liquor Problem,” *Atlantic Monthly*, vol. lxxxiii, p. 644. (May, 1899).

both reports were rejected, and the next Sunday, some investigator of proven trustworthiness in the work was sent there.

The results obtained therefore are fairly accurate. Many thanks are due to numerous ladies and gentlemen who kindly assisted in this work, and without whose help the study would not have been possible.

The study was made during the month of April, 1917. Spring weather this year developed at any unusually late date. This season of the year, it was felt, was a fair time in which to make the study. There was neither the pre-Christmas prosperity to discountenance, nor the mid-summer slackness to apologize for. The enumeration was furthermore confined to the Protestant churches and Jewish synagogues. Due to unavoidable circumstances, the Catholic churches were not included in the study of 1917, although they had been included in the study of 1912.

In tabulating the data, the two reports for each church were compared for the two Sundays, or otherwise in the case of the Hebrew synagogues. The day showing the larger attendance was selected in each case. Similarly, concerning the two reports for each service, if there was any difference, the report showing the larger attendance was accepted. The data presented, therefore, show the situation at its best. Every effort was made to be as fair to the churches as possible.

Tables I and II at the end of the chapter summarize the results of the study. It appears from these tables that the combined Protestant and Jewish places of worship, having a total membership enrolled of 21,394, have a morning attendance of 5,505, and an evening attendance of 7,203. The morning attendance amounts to about one-fourth of the membership, the evening attendance to about one-third of the membership. The proportion of men to women at the morning service is as 10 to 14, while at the evening service it is as 10 to 15.

It must at once be admitted that there are more fairly regular church attendants in the city, of non-Catholic faith, than the figures show. On one Sunday there may be 100 people in attendance in a certain church, and 125 the following Sunday, with the possibility that but 25

had attended the services on both Sundays. It is possible for the actual number of fairly regular church attendants to be twice as large as table I would show. This might be the case. In actual practice, every one knows that it is not. Anyone attending church with a fair degree of regularity can vouch for the statement that, with relatively few exceptions, the same brothers and the same sisters sit on the same pews virtually every Sunday. Surely to say that 7,500 includes the number of fairly regular morning attendants and 10,000 the number of evening attendants of like regularity, would be to make more than a sufficiently liberal allowance for the possibilities in the case.

Attendance must be contrasted however with population, not with membership. What proportion of the Protestant and Jewish elements in the community, i. e. Protestant or Jewish by background if not by formal allegiance, come into constant or consistent touch with the message of the church? How do these attendance data compare with the non-Catholic population of the city?

In the previous chapter, it was stated that the total number of baptized members reported by the Roman and Greek Catholic churches, and the Greek Orthodox church, was 16,296. From what one knows of the general efficiency of these organizations, together with what extended personal investigation over a number of years has shown, it is safe to say that there are very few people of Catholic faith in the city who are not formally in touch with one of the churches of their creed. Surely an allowance of 1,000 would more than cover any possible number of Catholics in Allentown who are not enrolled as members of one of the Catholic churches in the city. Subtracting such a total obtained, from the total population of the city, it appears that there are, in round numbers, about 58,000 people of non-Catholic faith in Allentown in 1917.

Comparing the number of attendants as given in Table I with this number, it appears that the morning attendance in the Protestant and Jewish houses of worship approximates one-tenth of the total number of people of that faith in the city. Eliminating the Hebrews as a negligible numerical element, one may say that on any

typical Sunday morning in the city of Allentown, one out of every ten Protestants will attend church. The best evening attendance revealed during the time of the study totalled 7,203. Comparing this with 58,000 population, one out of every eight people are shown to attend evening or vesper services.

Attention is called to the fact that the time of the year selected for the study, together with the fair weather conditions demanded, free the totals obtained from any suspicion of being under-statements. Rather is it evident that the total is probably higher than an average of the fifty-two Sundays of the year would be.

As previously stated, no census of attendance in the Catholic churches was attempted. However, in the earlier study of 1912 referred to, such an effort was made. The information obtained at that time indicated that there were few Catholics in the city who were not coming into more or less regular contact with their particular church. With the majority of the children attending the parochial schools in the city, with several masses on the Sabbath and with a daily mass in most of them, the number of Catholics in the city who are not in contact with their church is negligible.

The final conclusion to be drawn in this chapter is that after every allowance has been made for any and all kinds of circumstances, the fact nevertheless remains that the religious organizations of the city come into contact with a minority of the people of the city. That those with whom they do not come into contact are hopeless, hardened sinners, wicked men and women, is not implied. That all those with whom the church comes in contact are actuated by motives of reverent worship is not at all suggested. The conclusion reached means this one thing: that, as the situation stands in this city, the churches do not have the opportunity to exercise whatever influence they can or will, upon the majority of its inhabitants. Whatever religious influence comes to this majority, must come from some other source than the church.



TABLE I. SUMMARY.

Denomination	Membership	Attendance		Morning		Evening	
		Morning	Evening	Males	Females	Males	Females
Lutheran	6,820	1,544	1,941	569	783	683	1,014
Reformed	7,355	1,272	1,998	403	717	636	1,123
Evangelical	3,080	1,098	1,578	380	477	489	720
Methodist Episcopal	698	219	195	79	112	86	81
Presbyterian	674	224	197	84	118	54	75
Episcopal	586	180	141	93	87	59	82
United Br. in Christ	414	189	162	65	93	56	73
Miscellaneous	1,566	660	765	138	230	200	330
Hebrew	201	119	226				
Total	21,394	5,505	7,203	1,811	2,617	2,263	3,498

TABLE II. SUMMARY--Per Cent.

Denomination	Membership	Attendance: Per Cent of Membership		Morning--Proportion between sexes		Evening--Proportion between sexes	
		Morning	Evening	Males	Females	Males	Females
Lutheran	6,820	22.6	28.4	10	14	10	15
Reformed	7,355	17.3	27.1	10	18	10	18
Evangelical	3,080	35.7	51.2	10	13	10	15
Methodist Episcopal	698	31.4	27.9	10	14	10	9
Presbyterian	674	33.2	29.2	10	14	10	14
Episcopal	586	30.7	24.0	10	9	10	14
United Br. in Christ	414	45.6	39.1	10	14	10	13
Miscellaneous	1,566	42.1	48.8	10	17	10	16
Hebrew	201	59.2	112.4				
Total	21,394	25.7	33.7	10	14	10	15

## CHAPTER VI.

### SUBSTITUTES FOR CHURCH GOING.

Why do not more people go to church? Certain groups react in rather positive manner whenever this question is raised. One group, consisting for the most part of church-goers, are more or less positive that the non-goers are a hopeless lot, hardened in their iniquity, wilfully occupying themselves with the things of this world to the exclusion of things churchly. It is their firm belief that the people who are not in church are out of it because they deliberately choose not to shine as one of the stars in the church's crown. In the inner consciousness of this group is the feeling, seldom expressed but generally present, that they, being among those who attend church, are the children of light and of wisdom. The feeling often verges close to Pharisaism.

Another element—composed of non-goers to church—when confronted with this question, are promptly moved to utter all varieties of criticism against the church and those persons whom they associate with some religious organization. Their attitude is that if the church was as it should be, they would attend; if there were not so many hypocrites on the front pews, they would sit there; if the preacher was not so obviously favoring certain factions, they would hear him gladly. These are some of the more common utterances of this group, but they by no means exhaust the philosophy regarding the church which they will expound upon sufficient provocation.

Some years of effort to get at the truth of the matter has convinced me that both of these elements are prone to miss the mark, and that the excuses generally given are the superficial camouflage for the real reasons. Whatever may be the reason or reasons, this chapter presents the results of an effort to approach the problem from a different angle. The question which it is attempted to answer here is this: Where are the people who are not in church on Sundays, and what are they doing?

This, it is believed, is the first necessary step to getting at the truth in a scientific manner.

At the very outset, it must be recognized that the people not in church fall somewhat naturally into two groups. There are those who could not attend if they would, and there are those who could attend if they were so minded. This distinction is often lost sight of, but it is important that it should be maintained.

Our first concern will be with those who could not attend if they would. A study of this group shows it to be larger than most people suspect. There are obviously in this city, as in every modern city, those who are obliged to work on the Sabbath day. It is one of the purposes of this chapter to suggest the extensiveness of this group.

To begin with, there is the Lehigh Valley Transit Company. Mr. E. C. Spring, the general superintendent, states that at least 800 of the 1400 employees of the company are compelled to work seven days a week. This includes the conductors and motormen, the dispatchers, the men at the ticket offices, the sandmen, the employees at the car barn and the power plant, and other sundry occupations.

The police department of the city embraces a force of 49 men. Some of these are on duty from 6 a. m. to 6 p. m., the rest from 6 p. m. to 6 a. m. All of them are debarred from attendance at church services. Those on duty during the night must needs sleep during the daytime.

The annual report (1916) of the Allentown Fire Department shows a total of 47 paid firemen, who are, of course, on continual duty. In addition to these, there are 55 fire police, unsalaried, and engaged during the week in other occupations, but who are very likely to spend their Sundays at the fire company's quarters to keep in touch with things.

There are two telephone companies in the city. They are the Bell and the Consolidated. The chief operators of these companies kindly ascertained the number of people on duty from Saturday night until Sunday night. The total number reported for the two exchanges is 50. These are, of course, unable to attend church services.

There are two hospitals in the city—the Allentown and the Sacred Heart. The 1917 report of the Allentown Hospital states that an average of 130 persons are employed daily at the institution. The Sacred Heart Hospital reports 30. Of this total of 160, some undoubtedly receive an occasional Sunday "off," yet it seems reasonable to suppose that close on to 150 are employed in these institutions on a Sunday.

There are two telegraph companies in the city. Inquiry at both offices (Western Union and Postal) showed that 40 people were on duty on a Sunday at some time during the day which interfered with, and made impossible, their attendance at church services.

The 1917 city directory lists 29 drug stores in the city. Virtually all of these have cigar stands and soda fountains in addition to their drug business. In fact the drug business seems to be somewhat incidental to the business of the establishment in most of the cases. These stores are practically all open on Sunday, either the entire or a large part of the day. A visit on Sunday to a number of them revealed that as high as six people were employed in the larger ones, and two in the smaller ones. It was estimated that at least 60 people were obliged to work in the drug stores of the city on the Sabbath during church service time. This is a conservative estimate, and a careful and minute tabulation would probably reveal a larger number.

Similarly, the 1917 directory lists 38 retail confectionery stores. Few, if any of these, are closed on a Sunday. The larger ones have flourishing soda fountain businesses attached to them, and a visit to these revealed six to eight employees on a Sunday night. Most of them employed two people, and again it is conservative to state that at least 60 people are thus employed on a Sunday, either wholly or in part time.

There are more than fifty hotels in the city, of which number about 20 are of considerable size, with a goodly number of roomers and table boarders. These larger hotels employ clerks, elevator attendants, bell hops, waiters, cooks, chambermaids, etc. Counting the employees who work during the night together with the day service, one is surprised to find the number in a hotel of any size to exceed fifty. All of these are prevented

from attending church services by the nature of their employment. The total number of persons thus engaged by the hotels of the city is not known, but it is felt that that it may be estimated safely at 600.

Since it is the purpose of this chapter simply to suggest the extensiveness of Sunday employment, it will not be necessary to follow out in detail each specific line of work. Enough is it then to point out there are two taxi companies, sixteen auto supply companies, nineteen bakers, five motorcycle shops, eighteen garages, seven livery and boarding stables, forty meat markets, and two morning newspapers, the employees of which are for the most part prevented from attending church services, if they were so minded, by the very nature of their employment. A partial investigation of these various businesses justifies the estimate that about 250 persons are engaged in them on the average Sunday.

Then also are the chauffeurs; the brakemen, conductors, engineers and firemen on the railroads; the ticket and station agents; the commercial travellers, many of whom are compelled to be away from home over Sunday; the clerks in cigar stores; the janitors in stores, public buildings and apartment houses; the milkmen; the stewards in clubs; the managers, waiters and cooks in restaurants and delicatessen shops; all these being of a nature that requires seven-day-a-week service. It is the writer's judgment that 1,500 is not too large an estimate to cover the number of people in these employments in Allentown engaged on Sunday.

Several specific aspects of the matter of Sunday employment call for more detailed examination. In the first chapter it was pointed out that a large number of Allentonians were employed at the Bethlehem Steel plant. Of these, many are obliged to work on Sundays, or on the shift beginning Saturday night or Sunday afternoon. The number of these could not be accurately determined. Inquiry with the station policeman and ticket agent at the Lehigh Valley Station brought forth an estimate that 200 men left the city on Sunday mornings for the Bethlehem plant. The number leaving Saturday evening was estimated at 80. However, it must be remembered that by far the greater number commute to and from Bethlehem on the street cars. The car dis-

patchers, the motormen and conductors, and various workmen were spoken to regarding this matter, and from all that it was possible to discover, more than 1,000 men working at the Bethlehem Steel plant and living in Allentown are compelled to work at such hours as to make attendance at church services an impossibility.

The Traylor Engineering Company has a plant at Allentown which is one of the larger industries in the city. During the winter and spring months of the year 1917, the company had large ammunition orders. More than 1,500 men were employed there at that time and due to the urgency of the need for ammunition, work on these orders was prosecuted seven days a week. Perhaps it is not too much to say that 1,000 people were working there on Sundays at the time of this study. These, of course, were prevented from attending church services.

In addition to these more obvious aspects of the Sunday employment problem, there is another one which is apt to be overlooked. There are a large number of women in the city who support themselves, or who contribute to the family income, by the keeping of boarders and lodgers. These women are really engaged in gainful occupations, with the homes as the places of occupation. Where a woman has a number of lodgers, or more particularly if she keeps boarders, the duties which this imposes upon her, and her help, is apt to be of such an extent on Sunday, as on any other day of the week, as to keep her from attending church service. There is no way of determining how many women are thus situated, but their number has greatly increased recently, due to the influx of population. In the first chapter it was pointed out how the phenomenal development of certain industries under the stress of war orders had attracted many people. This influx has been far beyond any increase in the number of homes added. In the fall of 1917, the Bethlehem Steel Company, with a growth almost overnight of thousands of additional workmen, was forced to take up the problem of finding living accommodations for their employees. A canvass was made of the entire city in an effort to locate additional accommodations. It has been a matter of common observation that there has been a great increase in the number of families in Allentown keeping lodgers and boarders dur-

ing the past three years. This element is a constant factor in the topic under discussion in all towns, and in a town like Allentown where population has increased more rapidly than living accommodations have increased, the number is exceptionally large.

In regard to the inability of women to attend church services, there is another phase of the matter that needs attention at this point. Dinner on Sunday in the majority of Allentown families is served at noon, i. e., at 12 o'clock. Servant girls cannot go to the morning service at least. Nor can many women in those homes where there is no maid. Allentown housewives are good cooks. They are proud of their culinary accomplishments, and on the one day that the lord and master of the house is on hand, they are afforded an opportunity to show what they can do. There are many who will not risk the quality of the dinner by attending church services. Repeated observation of working class families purchasing table supplies on a Saturday night has, among other things, convinced the writer that the responsibility which this supply imposes upon the cook of the establishment does not permit serious consideration of church attendance on Sunday morning at least.

Many wives cannot go to church because they lack adequate clothes. To include this among the causes which actually prevent people from attending church services may be criticized. Of one thing is the writer sure. The women who will criticize this inclusion are not among those who are habitually or frequently in this predicament. The fact of the matter is that in the average working class family, the dress of the wife and mother indicates the economic status of the family. If there is any shortage, the wife and mother is the victim. If there are any sacrifices to be made, it is usually the mother who fills the breach. Woman's attire is, at the simplest, a complex and comprehensive matter. A woman may have a dress, but without the proper hat or shoes, she will not consider as public an appearance as church attendance. She may have hat, shoes, and gloves, but without a satisfactory coat, she refuses to sit even in the rear pew. It simply is an actual fact that many women do not go to church because they lack the satisfactory com-



bination of clothes which the characteristic self-esteem of the sex considers indispensable.

Besides those who are compelled to work on Sundays or the preceding Saturday nights, and those who cannot go to church because they lack presentable clothes, there are the sick. The sick are a constant element in any population. What percentage of the population of the city do the sick form?

This is a pertinent question. The City Club, of Milwaukee, made a sickness census of the city on November 11th, 1916. They found that on the day of the census 10 per cent of the entire population of the city was sick.

In October, 1916, the United States Public Health Service published the result of a sickness survey in North Carolina. The survey was made in April, 1916, which, it was pointed out, is an unusually healthy month in North Carolina. It was found that 3 per cent of all those people canvassed were sick.

The report on "National Vitality, Its Wastes and Conservation," in the findings of the National Conservation Commission, warrants the conclusion that between 3 and 4 per cent of the population of the United States are at all times seriously ill. If this percentage of sickness be assumed for Allentown, with its population of 75,000 in 1917, it means that 3,000 people, in round numbers, are seriously ill on any particular Sunday. Allowance must be made in addition to this number for those not seriously ill but indisposed to an extent which may interfere with church attendance.

Reference has been made to a number of groups which for any one or more of a number of reasons are prevented from attending church services. The discussion is by no means exhaustive. There are doubtless many other elements which fall within this category to which no attention has been called. The writer spent several weeks in working on this aspect of the situation. It was a source of constant surprise to find how the range and extent of these groups grew. Every inquiry and every trip through the city on Sundays brought forth additions to those who by the nature of their situation were outside the range of possibility of attending church services. No doubt if the investigation could have been

more exhaustive, the range of occupations and operative causes could have been shown to be much larger than herein mentioned.

Totalling those groups for whom numerical estimates are given in this chapter, and making a reasonable allowance for those groups mentioned without concrete estimates, there is every reason to conclude that at least 15,000 people in the city of Allentown are, on any particular Sunday of the year, either in a personal or an occupational condition which makes attendance at church service a matter of extreme inconvenience or utter impossibility. It is felt that an estimate of 15,000 is very conservative.

These groups exist in Allentown as they do in any other industrial center. They form an element which, in any discussion of church attendance, is apt to be overlooked, or at least greatly minimized. Yet it will be noticed that a conservative estimate of this element in its entirety is greater than the total number of church attendants in the entire city.

One substantial element of the population, then, is not in church on Sunday because it cannot be there. Whether it would be in church if it could, is another question concerning which no answer is ventured in this study.

There remain to be considered those who are in a position to go, but obviously will not go. What are they doing on a Sunday?

The first phase of the situation, considered from this angle, is the large number of people who can be seen on the streets of the city at any time of the Sabbath day that one may select. In this connection, interest is directed to those on the streets during the hours of church service. How many are there? Who do they seem to be? What are they doing?

The number is especially large during the time of the evening service, varying of course with the time of the year and the condition of the weather. However, on almost any Sunday evening of the year, between 7.30 and 8.30 o'clock (the time of the evening services in this city), one finds it somewhat difficult to walk with any degree of rapidity on certain parts of the main streets

of the city, due to the number of people promenading back and forth.

While the study of church attendance was in progress, an effort was made to measure the numerical proportions of this element. Naturally, the one way to determine upon any approximation of the actual number was to count heads. This was done, and in the following way. Two men, of whom the writer was one, were located at the western end of the main street, i. e., Hamilton street. One man was located at the point where Sixth street runs across Hamilton street, another man where Seventh street runs across Hamilton street, and another man where Tenth street runs across Hamilton street. These three streets are fairly well-travelled streets. Still another person was located at the western end of Linden street, running parallel to Hamilton street, and one block north. All of these persons started walking promptly at 7.30 o'clock, the time when church services began. They walked leisurely, in keeping with the pace of the average promenade, and counted all the people they passed. People walking in front of them or in back of them were not counted. The entire length of each of these streets named was traversed. A total of 4,356 people were reported by the enumerators. It is to be remembered that this count represents the people walking simply in one direction. As a general proposition, it may be assumed that probably as many were walking in the same direction as the enumerators. This is certainly true of the main street, although not entirely of the streets running crosswise, for in these cases, the enumerators walked away from the main street as they were taking their count, and it seems reasonable to suppose that at this early hour in the evening, more people were walking towards the main street than away from it. Double the number reported would be a total of 8,712 for these five streets. Surely, it would be a conservative estimate to say that 7,500 people were walking on these streets during this time. When it is realized that there are fourteen fairly well-travelled streets running parallel to Hamilton and Linden streets, and at least fifteen well-travelled streets running parallel to Sixth, Seventh and Tenth streets, disregarding the smaller streets in between, as well as the alleys, there certainly could be no objection

to the conclusion that there were between 15,000 and 20,000 people on the streets this particular evening. It will be remembered that the evening attendance for the Protestant and Hebrew churches was given at 7,500 in round numbers.

Most of the people encountered on the streets were young people—an almost endless procession of young men and young women, for the most part in their teens or slightly over, walking back and forth, looking and waiting to be looked at, wooing and willing to be wooed. Undoubtedly, the parents of many of these young people believed that they were in church. This excuse is often necessary in order to obtain parental consent to leave home on Sunday evening. But the writer has been convinced that there is, in this city, a most marked laxity of parental control over the younger members of the family.

During the summer of 1917, as this thesis was being written, a United States Army Ambulance Camp was located within the boundaries of the city. As many as 8,000 young men were stationed at this camp—Camp Crane—during the summer and early fall. During this entire time, the writer, as a member of the staff of a morning newspaper, was obliged to be on the streets at all hours of the night. The number of young girls, many with hair in braids hanging down their backs, who promenaded on the streets every evening of the week, is almost unbelievable. Insistently the question presented itself to the writer: Where are the parents of these girls?

Of course, in the case of girls over sixteen years of age, certain local facts have their bearing. Very many of these girls work in the numerous silk mills of the city. They are self-supporting for the most part. They probably contribute to the family income. This gives to them an undue independence of parental supervision. When a seventeen-year-old girl helps to pay the landlord or the grocer, it is somewhat difficult for parents to interfere with the "pleasure" of their daughter.

A similar enumeration of people on the streets during the time of the morning service was also made. The same streets were covered in the same way as was done in the evening. A total of 1,247 was reported for these five streets during the morning hour, i. e., from 10 to 11

o'clock. On this basis, it would seem reasonable to suppose that more than 4,000 people were on the streets of the city during the hour of the morning service. There were men going for their Sunday papers, young people making short visits to nearby neighbors, some little promenading, and doubtless the running of many errands.

These figures, while not wholly accurate, give at least a general idea of the numerical proportion of one element that is not in church. It is the element that is on the street during the time of church service.

Another group to be considered in this connection consists of those inhabitants of the city who go out of town on Sundays to take trips or make visits. It must be remembered that there are a large number of people in any modern city whose occupations tie them down the entire week the year around and who seize upon the Sabbath day as the one day available for purposes of this kind. Some of the Catholic churches in the city have shown a disposition to adapt themselves to the need of this class, and at least one of the larger churches of this faith observes a mass on Sunday morning at five o'clock, permitting certain of their members to spend the day out of the city, and yet attend the service of the church. The Protestant churches pay no attention to this group, except in certain instances to condemn it for its wickedness.

The railroads of the city maintained the practice for a long time of conducting semi-monthly excursions—one a month to New York City, and one a month to Wilkes-Barre. The ticket agents estimate the average number of those leaving the city on these trips to be between 250 and 300. Since the time of this study, these excursions have been discontinued, but at the time that the attendance census was made, they were being conducted.

In addition to these special excursions, there are the regular trains and the trolley cars, laden with people on a Sunday, and among their patrons being a large number of people leaving the city in the morning and returning to it at night. It is next to impossible to estimate the numerical proportions of this exodus for the day, but it is very large. It is an element which, if on the whole does feel a prompting to attend church services, pushes that inner urge aside for the pleasures and reliefs of a

day away from the city in which the rest of the week, perforce, is spent.

This study would, of course, not be complete without reference to the clubs of the city. That these compete with the church as attractions on the Sabbath day is very evident. It has come to be an almost constant item in any discussion of the church and the keeping of the Sabbath promptly to refer to the country club and its golf-playing devotees. After all, however, the number of people frequenting a country club on the Sabbath day bears a small proportion to the total population of a city.

The fact of the matter is that the club problem is a much more extensive one than a pointed reference to country clubs would suggest. In Allentown in 1917, there were more than fifty clubs, open or secret, where people were wont to gather on the Sabbath day. Of these, about half were organizations whose regular meeting time was on Sunday. Some of them meet every Sunday, some every second Sunday, and some every fourth Sunday of the month. Perhaps in the majority of cases, the time of meeting is in the afternoon.

The other half of these organizations keep open house on the Sabbath as they do any other day of the week, only usually more so. Members and their friends congregate here a whole Sunday long, talking, indulging in games of various sorts, eating, and drinking. In some of the cases, the main purpose of the day's meeting ostensibly is that of sociability, and whatever else develops might be treated as incidental. There are cases where this is not true, but where the obvious purpose is the dispensation of liquid refreshments, otherwise not obtainable under the provisions of the law. The sociability feature is incidental, and a product.

The number of people congregating at these places on any particular Sunday cannot be estimated. It varies considerably from Sunday to Sunday, but there is a certain element that is constant in its faithfulness. The number is very large. An idea can be gathered from a reference to the most largely attended of these clubs. The membership exceeds 2,000. Neighbors state, and personal observation proves, that there is a constant stream of people in and out, mostly the former, from 4 a. m. on a Sunday morning until an equally unusual hour

on Monday morning. One neighbor, a trained observer, accustomed to making estimates of numbers of people, states that it is his observation that several thousand people patronize the organization in the course of an ordinary Sunday.

There exists in Allentown this curious situation. The town's sentiment is definitely hostile to the opening of moving picture houses and theaters on the Sabbath day. Even meetings of an educational nature, or, as has recently been observed, meetings referring to urgent war work, are put on the defensive if held on the Sabbath day, no matter if the hour of meeting does not conflict with the time of meeting of any religious group. Simultaneously however, there exist, in relative abundance, and all over the city, clubs which are wide open on Sundays, using the term "wide open" with several shades of meaning. It is a most inconsistent situation, wholly without any basis of logic.

Not all of the agencies competing with the church have been mentioned in this study. Reference has, however, been made to the more significant ones from the local standpoint. More detailed investigation would no doubt reveal numerous others, even if of somewhat lesser numerical proportions. The whole question of Sunday papers would bear investigation, inasmuch as some 6,000 Sunday papers are sold in the city.

The situation may now be summarized. To begin with, there is a certain element in the city's population which is fairly regular in its attendance at divine services. It is a numerical minority. This is very evident. For the most part, it is the prosperous element of the population, the element composed of those with whom things are well here on earth, and who seem interested with characteristic foresight that things be well with them in the world to come.

This element attends church for many reasons. There are the truly pious ones. There are those who welcome the church as a means of social preferment or advancement. There are women who may want to exhibit their finery. There are men who wish to clothe themselves with an outer garment of respectability. There are maidens who must needs keep appointments, in the evening. There are younger members of the family to whom the

gospel is brought, figuratively, as it was to the medieval heathen, at the point of the sword. But at any rate, they come into contact with the church and its ministrations, and the leaders of the organization have at least an opportunity of cultivating the vineyard. What the fold of the increase is, is still, as Kipling says, another story.

Then there are those who are obliged either to work on Sundays or to work the night preceding and following. Their number is larger than most people appreciate. On the occasional Sundays which they "have off," they do not usually go to church. Church-going, like a good many other things, is a matter of habit. They do not form the habit, that is all. Their customary employment makes it difficult.

There are those who are sick or who lack the clothes which are satisfactory to themselves. They, too, are not in church, even should they desire to be there. This again is a large and constant element.

The greatest bulk of those able to attend but who do not, spend their Sundays somewhat as follows. Working regularly during the week, they seize upon Sunday morning as the one possible time to show their disdain of the alarm clock. Rising late, the Sunday papers require perusal. There may be other little odds and ends to be attended to. In the afternoon there are social contacts to be maintained. These may be in the club rooms, at a neighbor's house, on the street, at the corner drug store and where not. These social excursions may extend over the evening hours. Or there may be a trip out of the city, or an entertainment of friends from out of the city, visiting in turn. In short, Sunday is a day to be spent as one desires, a day free from the restraint and grind of the week, a day for one's self. Accustomed the entire week to routine, the spirit rebels against the routine of weekly church attendance or the routine of the service. Routine is the one thing to be escaped. And that is what church seems to mean primarily. Only those who are bound to their work for six days each week can appreciate this attitude of mind. It is an entirely reasonable and an entirely natural attitude.



The purpose of the study summarized in this chapter has not been to blame or to criticize. The intent has been to explain, to show what happens in actual practice, with incidental suggestions as to the reasons. This aspect of the matter is frequently overlooked. Yet it is essential to a scientific study of the whole matter.

## CHAPTER VII.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF SOCIAL CONTROL IN ALLENTOWN.

"The church," says Prof. Hayes in his "Introduction to the Study of Sociology," "has always been, and today is mainly, an agency for disseminating ideas and evoking sentiments which shape the inner springs of conduct. \* \* \* We must recall that the same human organization may be set to play any tune from 'The Messiah' to 'The Devil's Hornpipe,' that potentially man has as many stories as a skyscraper and he needs an elevator if he wishes to live on the highest level, that man is like a watch that must be wound up or it is sure to run down, like an engine propelled by storage batteries that must frequently be recharged, that, in literal phraseology, human life is the most variable of phenomena and that it is a matter of cause and effect, and we can expect the best effects in character and work and worth, only on condition of supplying the necessary conditions. And these conditions are largely to be found in the regular currents of social suggestion and radiation with which we surround ourselves. The church stands for the deliberate endeavor to seek and supply the social conditions essential to the highest life. \* \* \* Second, the church appears to have a permanent function not only as an agency of individual development, but also as the organ for giving effective social expression to purely ethical aims."

The preceding chapters represent the result of an inquiry to determine what proportion of the population in one city come into working contact with the organization which has the function and renders the services which this quotation suggests. It has been shown that a substantial part of the population of Allentown has no formal connection with the church. Even though there exist several small religious organizations which may, perchance, not be included in this study, and granting for the sake of argument that the allowance made for those residents having formal connection with churches out-

side of the city is inadequate, the fact nevertheless remains that an appreciable number of people in this city, with its large element of pious Pennsylvania Germans, is not connected even through the formality of affiliation with any church organization.

Still more important is the result of our attendance study. Granting again, for the sake of argument or liberality, that any and all the criticisms which may be directed against the manner of taking that census are true, granting that every single person in the city of Catholic and Greek Orthodox faith is in attendance every Sunday of the year, the fact again stands unchallenged that the church in Allentown comes into habitual contact with a minority of the people of the city. In fact, it is not too much to say that it comes into contact at all with only a minority of the population.

It has been shown that a part of the majority outside of the church is unable, by reason of varied influences, to come into contact with any of the religious organizations of the city. Another part could, but will not, again for any number of reasons, either within themselves or within the church, come into contact with it.

Two courses of action, or may it be said, two avenues of approach are open at this point. One may seek to determine why more people are not affiliated with, and in contact with, the Allentown churches, and seek to improve the condition in this respect. Or one may accept the situation as it exists in regard to the churches and turn to other agencies. This latter course will be followed here.

The essence of the thesis to be presented is this. The church comes into actual contact, and influences, but a minority of the people in this city. Even if its influence upon this minority is all that can be desired, there remains the majority to be considered. Whatever of religious, moral and ethical influence that is brought to bear upon this majority under actually existing conditions, must come from some other source. Whatever standards of conduct are evolved, whatever sense of values is developed, whatever conceptions of right and wrong are formed, whatever notion of individual and social responsibility is held, all these are, among the majority of the citizenship of Allentown, the product of

other forces than the direct touch of the religious agencies and organizations. This fact should be recognized, both by the church and these other agencies. This is the first necessary step.

What has been said is not said necessarily either in despair of or in criticism of the churches of Allentown. The church does a certain work in the city. Most men would place a certain value upon that work. But there is very much work of a similar or extended nature in this community which it does not do, cannot do, and is probably not destined to do. Our big mistake in the past has been our failure to appreciate this. The churches have been too jealous of the stars in their crowns, and have too often contented themselves with heaping maledictions upon the heads of the other agencies. On the other hand, these other agencies have been too indifferent to, or unaware of, their tremendous influence and possibilities.

Let the real facts of the situation then be recognized. They may or may not be what men prefer or think best. Only, only they are so. It is not what may be, should be, or might be, that is the basis upon which to proceed. It is a matter after all of what is. We must paint the picture to the God of things as they are. We must find what agencies in actual practice touch the lives of the greater number of people. If the church touches the lives of only a minority, it is important to know the agencies which touch directly the lives of the majority. What are these agencies? Whence receive the majority of people their ideas, their standards, their sentiments? What other agencies disseminate ideas and evoke sentiments which shape the inner springs of conduct? What other agencies perform the function of "giving effective social expression to purely ethical aims?" What other currents of social suggestion are there in the city?

First to be considered here, although not necessarily first in importance, is the motion picture. Since the movement arose some twenty years ago in France, there has come to be scarcely a spot in the civilized world where the motion picture has not penetrated. Allentown is no exception. In 1916, a rather detailed study of the movies of the city was made by Mr. C. Luther Fry,

a member of the then Senior class at Muhlenberg College. Mr. Fry is a capable and conscientious young man, who afterwards was graduated with first honors. The study was made at the instigation and under the direction of the writer, and covered a period of over a year. It was extensive and complete.

Mr. Fry found twelve moving picture theatres in the city. A study of the attendance of all of these revealed, for the year as a whole, an average weekly attendance of about 7,000. Of course, one dare not say that the number of persons attending weekly is six times the daily attendance. Mr. Fry attended theaters constantly in an effort to determine to what extent that attendance was a steady one, i. e., to what extent the same faces were to be seen every second day, every week, or every two weeks. His conclusions are interesting. "I believe," he writes, "taking it month by month, that the average patron goes to movies about once a week. From this it is evident that we are dealing with an enterprise of enormous proportions, one that influences the lives of at least sixty per cent of the population of Allentown."<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere, he concludes that eighty-five per cent of this number are adults.

The influence of the movies is tremendous, speaking quantitatively. The motion picture speaks in the concrete. It is a rather selective type of person who moulds his or her conduct by abstract thought and pure reflection. The average person thinks of right and wrong in the nature of concrete examples. The unseen is of scant moment. The strong stimuli to the senses of the concrete—that it is which thrusts forward definite exertions. The example of the enemy who follows to the death; the awakened wit that casts about to baffle the cunning of the rival; the imagery of hate, love, terror, daring, goodness and honesty, all elemental emotions; concentrate thought and momentarily rouse inner forces of both young and old. These concrete cases start currents of thought and direct them by the nearest and most intimate stimuli. They utilize material from immemorial sources and set forth the life processes in popular form. The very evils of the movies which the pulpit ex-

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<sup>1</sup> From an unpublished manuscript.

plots in general and the press in its particular products, prove what is here claimed, and that is that the screen is a mighty and powerful influence in the dissemination of ideas and the evoking of sentiments which shape the inner springs of conduct.

As this was being written, there came to hand, in confidence, a most significant story. A married woman had illicit relations with a man who was not her husband. Certain friends, aware of the relationship, attempted to dissuade her, but of no avail. Finally, it so happened that, on successive days and in different theaters, she saw portrayed on the screen very vividly the "Final Payment." Each story approximated or coincided with her own. The impression created by these filmed concrete stories did what the persuasion of friends could not do. They effected a "readjustment of attention which brought into the middle of the stage in her mental drama the ennobling ideas and sent away from the spotlight of attention the ideas that drag life down." And what is this but, in the religious sense, "being born again?" Whether the conversion in this particular case is destined to be a lasting one cannot be foretold. Suffice it to remember that many conversions which the church stages are not permanent.

It is but the truth to say that the motion picture theaters of the city are more influential than the churches. They touch the lives of more people than do the churches. They speak in simpler, plainer, more appealing and understandable language than the preachers. Their influence may not be all that is desired. The above statement is the statement of a quantitative measurement, not of a qualitative comparison. The screen is a mighty agency, for good or for evil. It has great potentialities. Whether these are used for good or for evil depends upon direction.

What has been said of the motion picture is true of the legitimate stage, and the influence of the moving picture theater is similar to that of the theater of the spoken word. There are two such theaters in the city of Allentown. One is devoted to vaudeville, the other to drama and opera. The seating capacity of the latter is close on to 1,500, that of the former very near to that figure. Both are crowded almost nightly. Matinees are

numerous and well attended. If everything that has been alleged against the theater, from the time of the English Puritans down to the Rev. William Sunday, be true, it but proves what is our main contention. And that is the influence of the theater. If much of that which is produced on the boards smacks of back-alley Parisian indecency, or hectic melodrama, and the influence of these is markedly bad, that does not change the circumstance which this thesis alleges. Neither does the wholesomeness of "The Man From Home," "Pollyanna," or "Peter Pan" effect our thesis. What it is sought to stress here is that the theaters in this city touch the lives of, and influence, for good or for evil, a large number of people. "Pollyanna" preaches a more effective sermon with its concrete story than any abstract effort of any Allentown preacher on the theme of gladness—this, personified, is our contention.

It is absolutely remarkable how little serious thought is everywhere given to the press. It is perhaps because it is so common an object that it is so seldom the subject of serious reflection. The female of the species is apt to think of it mainly as the vehicle for bargain prices or the expression of organized gossip. The business man considers it as an avenue for advertising. Cooks, butlers, clerks and workers think of it seriously only as a clearing house for want ads. Actors, singers, authors and pugilists each read their special columns and wonder when the editor intends to engage some one really acquainted with the only subject worth reading. Politicians read it with smirking assent or explosive repudiation. Athletes secretly clip and file all references to themselves and subconsciously wonder why the sporting page is not the front page. Old women and mellow men read the obituary column and feel that the paper is interesting and startling, or the reverse, depending upon the length of this column. Finally there is the general reader who wants all the news, transcribed with finished skill, and presented in the most pleasing and flattering, or most scathing and sarcastic, manner possible. All of these groups have on their lips the daily threat of stopping the reading of the paper, all loudly acclaim that the paper is "full of lies," yet every single one of them greedily devours the latest edition and, in his or her heart of

hearts, accepts its "stories" with all of that implicit trust which most persons have in the printed word. What is enshrined in print comes before the community with peculiar force, all other statements to the contrary notwithstanding.

Everybody reads the paper. It penetrates into every nook and corner, it speaks to all classes, it influences all elements. The extensiveness of the influence of the press in this city can perhaps best be measured by recourse to data on circulation. There are five daily papers published in Allentown. Their combined circulation, as reported to the government, is about 47,000. Not all of this circulation however is confined to the city. There is, especially in the case of the two morning papers, a large circulation in the neighboring towns, villages and hamlets. Accurate data on the exclusive city circulation of these five dailies were not obtained. Inquiry among two of them however justifies the conclusion that between 25,000 and 30,000 of this circulation is in the city itself. In addition to the local dailies, there is a widespread circulation of metropolitan dailies. Accepting the returns from the two city agencies which handle these metropolitan dailies, between 6,000 and 6,500 of them circulate in the city during each of the six days of the week. Adding this to the circulation of the local dailies, it is evident that virtually every family in the city receives two daily papers. This is an average, with exceptions on both sides of the fence. Surely data such as these indicate most clearly that the modern newspaper is of all private institutions the most comprehensive in influence and function. No mechanism of communication and expression is so pervasive and characteristic as the daily press.

The daily press in Allentown, as in any other city in the United States, is a powerful and influential agency. "It is hard for a man to estimate its power even in his own country," says Bryce in "The American Commonwealth," "and of its action in America I speak with diffidence, feeling how much more there is to be known than I know."<sup>2</sup> This summarizes the truth for perhaps all of us.

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<sup>2</sup> Volume II. p. 233. (1889 Edition).



One of the most powerful means of social control is public opinion. "Public opinion," says Hayes, "controls by keeping constantly before the mind the idea that certain courses of action will be rewarded with reputation, respect and friendship, while other courses will be punished with ostracism, hatred and contempt. The ideas which we have concerning public opinion, like those we have of law, both define the nature of the acts that will be rewarded and punished, and fix the degree of recompense anticipated. It is the idea a man has concerning public opinion that governs him. Hence, whatever spreads abroad the idea that society is lax in its standards and negligent in its responses, reduces its control over its members, and whatever spreads the idea that society is exalted and exacting in its standards and emphatic in its condemnations and approvals, enhances its control."<sup>3</sup>

In view of these facts, the press assumes a tremendous responsibility and has a most significant function. It sets forth the vicious, the depraved, and the criminal. It catalogues anti-social, and to an extent, non-social acts, with the illustration of their consequences. It shows to all men what all men should know—that anti-social conduct can count on social execration. Similarly, the press emphasizes the well-behaved and the good, the orderly and the successful. It stresses the activities put forth to improve society. The press does this more than most people will confess. Readers are not so startled and impressed with news of this kind. A half-column story of a suicide or murder attracts more attention than a column or half-column story of the plans of the Vacant Lot Farmers' Association for the coming summer, yet they stand side by side. The press shows to all men what all men ought to know, that upright conduct and socially beneficial conduct can count on social approval and appreciation. The press "tends powerfully, thru publicity, to enforce a popular, somewhat vulgar, but sound and human standard of morality."<sup>4</sup>

Of course, the press nowhere does this perfectly. Mistakes are made, over-emphasis and under-emphasis there are. But on the whole the situation in Allentown,

<sup>3</sup> "Introduction to Sociology," pp. 681, 682.

<sup>4</sup> Cooley. "Social Organization." p. 85.

and perhaps everywhere, can be well illustrated by a story told of an old judge who was asked what sort of a circuit he had had. "Well, much like other circuits," he answered. "There were a good many verdicts for the defendant that ought to have been for the plaintiff, and a good many verdicts for the plaintiff that ought to have been for the defendant. But, on the whole, justice was done."

Especially direct as an influence in the moulding and shaping of public opinion is the editorial page. The editorial page of the Allentown papers has, in recent years, undergone a marked transition. Time was when purchased plate matter and the liberal use of shears and paste pot were the Alpha and Omega of editorial preparation. Today, the editorial writers of the Allentown dailies are writing upon a variety of topics, and, for the most part, in a readable and purposeful manner. Partisan politics have to a great extent been banned. News is being intelligently commented upon, with commendation or condemnation as is considered justifiable; national, community and moral questions are discussed. One of the daily papers devotes its editorial column almost entirely to the discussion of religious, moral or ethical themes. Another city paper has an editorial of a moral nature every Saturday morning, with frequent digressions in that direction during the other days of the week. The social emphasis in the Allentown editorial columns is marked.

It is impossible to state how widely the editorial page is read in this city. A year's experience as editorial writer on the Allentown Morning Call has convinced the writer that it is read more frequently and more generally than is commonly supposed.

Besides giving form and weight to the sanctions of public opinion, "the press exercises another form of social control, a control that is not dependent upon sanctions but results directly through social suggestion, sympathetic radiation, and imitation. Without regard to what the government may do or what others may do to us or think about us, each one has an inner stream of ideas and sentiments which is the essence of life, and the control of which is the individual's prime concern if he wishes to make something of himself, and is society's

deepest concern in its attempts to control its members." <sup>5</sup>

The press gives to attention its bent. And attention is the determinant of conscious life. That which occupies the attention of men is that which, as conscious beings, they are, and is that which they will do; while that which has no place in their attention is for them as if it were not. This direction of public attention gives to the reporter and the editor a powerful influence in the community. The reporter tells his story. He is supposed to narrate the facts. But there are ways and ways of reciting the facts, even where there is no bias or partiality. Every experienced newspaper man knows that a mere recital of facts can be given in a number of different ways, each strictly true and impartial, yet each creating a different influence. Even in the most colorless story there is a certain attitude or atmosphere which has escaped from the writer. There are, too, any number of little tricks of the trade which every news writer is aware of, and practices at times either deliberately or unconsciously.

As this is being written, there comes to attention a fine case of social suggestion. An Allentown daily printed a story of the arrest of a fourteen-year-old girl, unbelievably loose in morals and in an advanced stage of syphilis. The story was masterfully written and less than a quarter of a column in length. Both her immorality and physical condition were told practically between the lines of the story. It is our sincere judgment, on the basis of the numerous contacts with the public mind which newspaper work establishes, that that little story did more to prepare a substantial part of the people of the city for a law dealing with syphilis on a basis of social protection than any address, lecture, appeal, sermon, or what not. Examples like this are a matter of almost daily observation to men engaged in the newspaper business.

Again, it is difficult, to put it in the vernacular, to "put anything across" without the aid of the press. In fact, the combined influence of the press in a city like Allentown can make or break any public project. There

<sup>5</sup> Hayes, "Introduction to Sociology." p. 683.

may come to mind cases of political victories where this has not been true. These may be the exceptions which prove the rule. Or, what is more likely to be the case, the blatant partisanship manifested in such cases defeats the very purpose which it seeks to accomplish. One knows of cases where the obvious hounding of men by certain newspapers increases in just that proportion the number of his stalwart friends. But in the great majority of cases, where there is no evidence of prejudice or partisanship that appears on the surface, or where there really is none, a project moves in exact ratio with the amount of printer's ink that is used.

What is the influence of the daily press? This is a question upon which those who administer the influence are best able to speak. Let us cite therefore at this point the opinion of some of the leaders of the press in this city.

Percy B. Ruhe is the editor-in-chief of the Allentown Morning Call, the local paper with the largest circulation. An Allentonian does not conceive of Mr. Ruhe and the Morning Call separately. The two stand associated in the public mind. He is a man of high ideals, both personally and professionally, and has some big local movements as monuments to his activity. Concerning this matter, he made the following statement:

"In the days of tradition men secured information thru their ears. They were ear-minded. The child of today, under the age of six, with its ability to imitate most accurately the voices and inflections of other people, to learn foreign languages, to commit to memory lengthy bits of prose and poetry, is the best illustration at hand of primitive man.

"Since the days of the printing press, men and women more and more have become eye-minded. Those things which come to them thru the sense of sight make strong impressions upon them. Other senses become dulled in the extreme use put to the eyes in bringing information.

"Can we not seek the cause of the comparatively lessened influence of the oral word and of the increasing influence of the press in this elementary and highly important factor in the manner in which civilized man is securing his information?

“I have frequently said to clergymen: ‘The newspaperman has a far larger audience than any clergyman can ever hope to have. He can hold that audience for hours and he can hold it not only for one day per week, but seven, and he does not have to confine his ministrations to a limited number of services per day.’ The clergyman envies the newspaperman’s strategic position, for he realizes it fully. Yet only the sensational preachers to date have much availed themselves of the great opportunities afforded them thru the press.

“It might be added that there is an almost childish acceptance by the great majority of readers of what the newspaper contains. The regard amounts to an almost religious faith with many. There is little question and little or no demand for authority. The spoken word is far more apt to fall on ears that hear not than the printed word upon eyes that see not.

“‘I see by the paper,’ is the final authority of millions. ‘The paper says,’ is the ipse dixit for the newspaper reader.

“With such an attitude on the part of the people, how important it becomes that the newspapers of the country should be directed by men of the highest ideals of service, with the strictest regard for truth and justice, and with ability and energy to seek and arrive at the truth. The paper has become the pulpit for millions and it is incumbent that from this pulpit should come the voice of truth, the thunder of justice, and the highest ideals of mercy, sympathy and service. More and more are such ideals being realized. More and more are there men in the journalistic profession who see in its labors the great opportunities for service to their fellowmen.”

Similarly do we wish to quote William L. Hartman. If one does not in Allentown dissociate Percy B. Ruhe and the Morning Call, one certainly does not in this community dissociate the newspaper profession and William L. Hartman. For thirty-eight years, his waking hours have been taken up with newspaper work. He knows the profession, and he knows the city and its people, as few men in Allentown know them. He is careful and exacting in his work, judicially minded, and not given to making rash statements. He is at present the city

editor of the *Morning Call*. His statement on this matter follows:

“The press of Allentown has been a distinct, vital and virile force for good in the life of the city. Looking back over an experience of thirty-eight years with papers in Allentown, I unhesitatingly make this statement.

“The newspapers have ever been in the van in movements tending to the moral uplift of the city and its inhabitants. No propaganda has been started in Allentown for the moral benefit of its people but had back of it all the support, moral and material, of the press. The papers have been unstinted in their support of, and assistance to, philanthropic, humanitarian and religious movements. This was made manifest in a most striking manner recently during the several campaigns that resulted in the raising of nearly a million dollars among our people for educational and charitable institutions. The press could easily have held aloof or given only moderate support. Instead, its efforts were bent to the success of each and every movement, and the campaign managers of each gave the press the heartiest commendation for invaluable services cheerfully and unstintedly given.

“Again, in its treatment of the news of the day, the press of the city does not over-accentuate, as a rule, the vices and crimes to the exclusion of other news. Opportunity is frequent to make a spicy paper, gossipy, scandal-mongering, pandering to the lowest tastes of the community. But to the credit of the papers be it said that rare indeed is the instance when the press in this city stoops to such low and degrading influences. Instead, the press stands for high ideals and for a clean code of ethics of the profession, and the entire community is the gainer accordingly.”

Charles S. Weiser is the editor of the *Allentown Democrat* and the *Allentown Evening Item*. He is an old, experienced newspaperman, scion of a family of newspapermen. His editorial writings in both of these papers are widely read. His daily editorials in the *Item* are, with rare exceptions, devoted to some religious, moral or ethical theme. Concerning the influence of the press he says:

“Morally and religiously, I believe the newspaper to be the greatest force of the twentieth century. I firmly

believe this because welfare workers and clergymen have repeatedly told me the same thing. Not only is this true of the great metropolitan journals, but of the so-called country-town newspapers—at least those that are fearless enough to take a stand for the right.

“Only a few minutes before I began writing this a well-known clergyman, in giving me a suggestion for an editorial theme, remarked that the world today looks to the newspaper for much of its moral and religious teaching and that the modern editorial is more like a sermon than the editorial of former days. ‘You reach a class of readers that the church and the church papers do not reach, and you are paving the way for them that eventually will lead them into the church,’ he said. Unquestionably, this is expert testimony.

“The making of the press as a force for good was not the result of revolution, but rather, evolution. The change has come gradually, but steadily until today the newspaper is regarded as a teacher of morals and a preacher of religion, and the editor who is truthful and right-purposed and noble-spirited, cannot fail to build up character, create worth, enlarge, broaden and quicken men with a potency unsurpassed by any other agency.

“Whenever I think of the sneers with which newspapers and editorial opinions were received before the press became the power it now is, I am reminded of Christ’s parable about the stone which the builders rejected. ‘And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.’ ”

Motion pictures, the theater, the press. These are some of the more important agencies which mould, influence and suggest the standards of the majority in this city. There are other currents of social suggestion. This study has not meant to be exhaustive. Reference has simply been made to the more important agencies which disseminate ideas and evoke sentiments which shape the inner springs of conduct. Without a doubt these agencies touch the lives of more people than do the churches of the city. They touch them more regularly, and in more relaxed moments. It is this fact which gives them the power of impressing so deeply. These agencies may not be held in the same sacred esteem in which the church

is held, but it is the very common-place position which the press and the movies occupy in the public mind which makes it possible for them to exert such a large, direct, even if unconscious, influence.

In Allentown, as perhaps everywhere, people make this ridiculous error. They make the same kind of a classification of social agencies as has prevailed for such a long time in the academic world. It is a classification which is based upon the idea of so many separate and water-tight compartments, each with its own exclusive preserves. Intellectual leaders for a long time have been proceeding upon the assumption that there is one shelf which holds all knowledge of biology, another shelf for all the data of psychology, another for the facts of geology, and woe betide the meddlesome heretic who would be so unorthodox as to mix them. Much of the criticism against the science of society is due to the fact that its leaders have been mixing the contents of these compartments. Similarly in the matter under discussion here. Men have said, and acted on the assumption, that the church saves souls and teaches moral standards; the motion picture amuses restless women, curious children and fatigued men; the theater is a place to waste time and money in a search for recreation; and the press supplies the organized gossip of the community. The church has refused to recognize or affiliate with these other agencies, to admit their function and their influence. Similarly, these agencies have failed to appreciate properly their tremendous power and possibilities.

If all of these forces—church, press and theater—were to work together, what could they not accomplish? As these pages are being written, the grave crisis which confronts civilization is seeing them federated for certain national purposes. May it not be hoped that in the new and better era that is to be, such a federation may be effected looking towards the improvement of society, the uplift of the masses, the formation of Christian character, and a high valuation of the things which are supremely worth while.

[The End.]







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