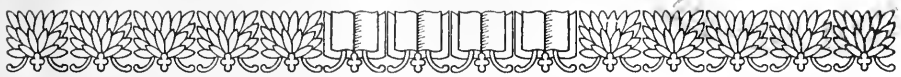


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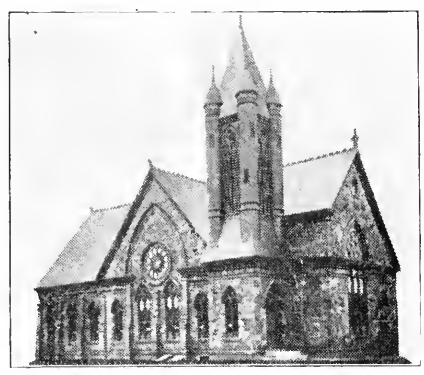
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United Brethren in Christ. Church of the ...

Quadrennial Report

of the Church Erection
Secretary



To the Twenty-Fifth General Conference
United Brethren In Christ
Convening at Canton, Ohio, May, 1909



*Honored Bishops, Fathers, Brethren, Sisters, and Friends, in the General Conference.
Greeting:*

WE ARE BUILDING.

The quadrennium has been one of great activity in the building of churches and parsonages, making a gain of almost \$2,000,000. The increase in values shows a larger proportion than in the number of churches built, owing to the fact that much costlier churches than formerly have been constructed and many old ones were replaced by larger and better buildings. The aggregate property values now reach the handsome amount of \$10,236,417 as placed upon 4,000 churches and 1,000 parsonages. Compared with twenty years ago, when nine-tenths of our churches were in rural districts, and rated at \$4,000,000, this gives our present property interests an increased valuation of \$6,236,417. During the last decade seven-tenths of the new churches were built in towns and cities. These facts plainly show the sweeping transition that has been made from being almost solely a country church to one that is courageously grappling with the problems in establishing herself in the growing towns and cities all over the nation.

AN INDISPENSABLE FACTOR.

In this achievement the Church Erection Society has been an indispensable factor. Our forward march proceeds no faster than the pace of this essential agency, in furnishing churches. Others may find the places, but it is left to Church Erection to secure them. In the country our constituency and friends builded the churches, but in the rushing towns and cities churches must first be built to make a constituency and friends. With our splendid growth the weight of this work necessarily multiplies.

It is to be deplored that our Church Erection work is not founded on an integral basis rather than subdivided into almost as many independent or local organizations, as there are annual conferences, aside from the General Society. These conditions do not mean simply a distraction of funds and energy, but that which is worse, they provincialize the work and compel the doing of here a little and there a little, whereas the supreme duty of the hour for this department is to encounter the larger and needier fields at a greater cost and task than we are able to perform under our present plan.

As we have established Indianapolis, Columbus, Kansas City, Mo., Chicago, Omaha, Oakland City, Riverside, Los Angeles, Walla Walla, Chattanooga, Atlanta, Galesburg, Hamilton, Cincinnati, Wilkesburg during the quadrennium, so in a more triumphant way, entailing a greater expense, we should very soon go into Philadelphia, Pittsburg, South Bend, St. Louis, Kansas City, Kan., Decatur, Scranton, Buffalo again, Chicago in many places, and other great cities, as well as into the new and prolific sections of the country that are now being opened by the Government, traversed by continental railroads, through which constant streams of our good people are flowing to these lands of promise. Shall we not claim our heritage as an American church with our loyal, genial, American spirit? To invade these many waiting places, with the assurance of success, demands a united front along the whole line.

Our conference boards are doing a good work, and in a few of the stronger conferences commendable enterprises have been set in motion by them, but the fact nevertheless remains that there should be a general, dominant plan and purpose in all of our mission building work, championed by all our leaders, and thus victoriously lay siege on the great fortifications of sin, supported by a solid Church. This is an age of concentration of capital and energy and from the stupendous commercial and industrial conquests all around us we should learn that the largest building enterprises can be handled only by united forces.

As affairs are now conducted, the General Board is not in touch with the work of our conference boards, and neither can it be, for they are beyond its reach. Honored members of the General Conference, none of the other great, aggressive churches presume to administer their affairs under such a lame policy. Dr. Charles H. Richards, Secretary of the Congregational Church Building Society, says: "We have no independent or State societies, for which we are grateful. Such a plan, in our judgment, does not work well." Dr. Robert Forbes, Corresponding Secretary of the Board of Church Extension of the Methodist Episcopal Church, writes: "Every Conference Board of Church Extension is auxiliary and responsible to the Parent Board." Dr. H. H. Weber, General Secretary of the Board of Church Extension of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, General Synod, adds: "We have no independent societies. All work goes through our Central Board." Dr. G. W. Muckl y, Corresponding Secretary of the Board of Church Extension of the Christian Church, also says: "We do not have any State organizations." The splendid success of these boards and the many churches they are building in their work of extension can only be admired and dare not be ignored by us.

We do not mean this to be an attack on our conference boards, but we do most earnestly protest against our present fallacious system. Under a general, single plan the interests of each and every conference would be enlarged and better conserved than they now can be. With the multiplied increase of funds and power, as a united order would insure, the work of this department would soon speed with irresistible momentum for the permanent extension of God's cause everywhere throughout our domain.

The policy of separate, provincialized work is obsolete and ought to be discarded by us. This General Conference should harness all our church-erection work to pull the same way, so as to draw the heavy loads that challenge our combined strength. The United Brethren Church was never keener of vision than now, never more ardent in her devotion to the Master's cause. She has a mighty work to accomplish, and that this may be well done, let us provide for her a mighty equipment.

CITY FUND.

About the middle of the quadrennium the "City Fund" was instituted and incorporated as a part of the Society's work. This fund was created to be absolutely devoted to loans for churches in cities having a population of not less than 50,000. Thus far \$17,352.10 cash, and pledges representing about \$25,000 more, were secured by specials, these having been its only source of income. The conference revenues were left undisturbed in supplying the General Fund. This special work, in part, is meeting a long-felt want and is growing in favor with our people.

MONTHLY CHART.

A chart has been devised to give the results of the canvass for funds. This method of publication created new interest as it imparted information by telling its own story each succeeding month through the columns of the Telescope. The goals

fixed at \$26,500, \$30,000, \$35,000, and \$50,000 for the years of the quadrennium in the order named, have been reached, aggregating \$141,000. These figures represent all that was secured in cash, contingent notes, real estate, and mortuary notes.

THE EASTER APPEAL.

At the Columbus, Ohio, Board meeting, held April, 1907, a departure from the assessment plan to an open Easter offering was decided upon. Accordingly a proposition for said change of operation was submitted to and accepted by nearly all of the annual conferences. The first year's results of the new plan do not show decided gains above the amounts realized the few previous years, through the assessments and Easter parsonage collections, yet the amounts secured by the pastors who faithfully presented the cause to their people justifies the change. This glorious day should be designated by the General Conference as the special time for Church-Erection contributions in all our churches, Sunday schools, and Young People's Societies. A sister church of about the same numerical strength as ours, by a united and thorough effort on Easter several years ago, secured \$40,000 for her church-extension work.

PARSONAGE FUND.

One-fifth of the returns from the Easter offerings, \$1,600, was credited to the Parsonage Fund, and this was its only resource last year. This fund has grown from \$5,911.50 to \$12,500.00 during the quadrennium. The time is here when the women of our Church should be called upon to support this fund. We believe that the many Ladies' Aid Societies and kindred organizations among us should be enlisted to make annual appropriations to this work, which is so essential to the domestic happiness and comfort of our itinerants and their families. Where our women are not organized for any special work, under the direction of the pastors, they will gladly, in a private way, secure offerings each year for this fund. Our mothers, our wives, our sisters, our daughters are the rightful conservators of the home, and let us here, by action, dedicate them to the beautiful and tender work of aiding, in their own way, the Parsonage Fund.

LOT OR GRANT FUND.

The time has also arrived in the history of our work when a Lot or Grant Fund should be created. Within the bounds of every annual conference there are towns and cities of strategic importance, to which many of our people emigrate. An available fund to purchase well-located lots in such places as a straight gift to the probable church, would prove a great entering wedge for subsequent operations. Such a fund could be sustained by charging a small rate of interest, say from one to two per cent., on the loans. By this method all our income would be retained in the permanent funds to the Society. Then, too, there are persons who would be glad to contribute to such fundamental work.

BOARD OF MANAGERS.

The Board of Managers elected at the last General Conference, consisting of the honored Bishops and Doctor Whitney, Dr. H. F. Shupe, Dr. I. H. Albright, Rev. S. C. Coblenz, Rev. W. F. Parker, J. M. Cogan, Esq., Mr. H. J. Roop, and Mr. J. A. Weinland, held regular annual meetings at Dayton, Ohio, Columbus, Ohio, Chambersburg, Pa., and Canton, Ohio. At these meetings the proceedings of the Executive Committee were heard and ratified. The reports of the General Secretary and the Field Secretary were also submitted and considered, and other important business trans-

acted. Addresses of great strength and inspiration were delivered by Rev. G. P. Macklin, D.D., Rev. H. F. Shupe, D.D., and Rev. W. R. Funk, D.D., all of which were published in tract form and distributed throughout the Church

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

Rev. H. F. Shupe, D.D., Chairman; Rev. H. A. Thompson, D.D., LL.D., Prof. A. W. Drury, D.D., Mr. L. O. Miller, Treasurer, and the General Secretary composed the Executive Committee, which held one hundred and four meetings through the quadrennium, when the correspondence and applications for aid were carefully scrutinized. Some of these applications have been cheerfully granted, while others had to be reduced, or even refused. It may have been for lack of money; it may have been because the community seemed already over-churched, or because the outlook did not warrant the risk. But every application received sympathetic and thorough examination at their hands. Rev. G. P. Macklin, D.D., of large experience, and who served with distinction for a number of years, because of his removal from Dayton, to the regret of the other members, was obliged to relinquish the work a year ago. His vacancy was ably filled by the election of Prof. A. W. Drury, D.D., who proved of inestimable value as a judicious counselor.

FIELD SECRETARY.

To the energetic and tactful work of Rev. H. A. Sechrist, Field Secretary, is a great share of the credit due, for any measure of success that has been achieved. His earnest, yet genial spirit, and gentlemanly deportment have won support and many friends for the Society everywhere he has gone.

FINANCIAL ITEMS.

Our books were closed on March 31, 1909, the fiscal ending of the quadrennium, with a cash balance of \$4,098.87.

It is to be regretted that after an earnest effort to realize on our outstanding loans, \$35,000 remains unpaid. A portion of this amount is long overdue. It would be well to place a larger measure of responsibility on our annual conference authorities for the prompt refunding of these claims, which is very essential in granting relief to the many waiting churches.

At the Dayton board meeting the Treasurer was ordered to deduct one per cent. for the defraying of incidental expenses on all loans made.

It will be observed that the death notes secured during the quadrennium have not been invoiced because of possible contingencies, which amount to \$29,900. They have all been legally written, and will doubtless at some future time prove a source of handsome revenue.

Neither could wills nor bequests be listed, for they are usually of an uncertain kind and quantity. Yet we have knowledge of some persons who have generously remembered the Society in this manner. There are now two cases pending in the civil courts, where wills devising liberal amounts to the Society are being contested. It is believed that both cases will finally be decided in our favor.

The Annuity Fund is becoming more popular, the better its benefits are being understood. A five per cent. rate of interest is usually paid on these investments, though in a few instances six per cent. has been demanded. Eleven thousand dollars for this fund have been secured through the quadrennium.

Our capital, as taken from the Treasurer's books, now amounts to \$228,662.09, including all the assets that have been invoiced, cash, real estate, and notes. This makes a net gain of \$91,212.11 for the quadrennium. Had not the business depression of last year interfered, it is believed a round \$100,000 might have been reported as so much increase to the several funds of the Society.

RECAPITULATION.

	For the Quadrennium	From the Beginning
Total net assets secured.....	\$91,212 11	\$228,662 09
Loans on churches.....	112,255 00	404,005 00
Loans on parsonages.....	9,900 00	17,800 00
Number of churches aided.....	86	527
Number of parsonages aided.....	18	47
Refunded loans	63,109 42	

NOT INVOICED.

Mortuary notes	\$29,900 00	\$46,250 00
Bequests	35,000 00	
Retained by conferences.....	23,582 00	
Special for Southern District.....	500 00	
Kansas City Church.....	9,265 00	
Oakland, California, Church.....	873 00	

RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. That independent or conference Church-Erection Societies be made auxiliary to the General Society.
2. Easter be designated as Church-Erection Day, when offerings for this cause shall be taken in all our churches, Sunday schools, and Young People's Societies. This plan to be in lieu of an assessment.
3. The creation of a "Lot Fund" for the purchase of desirable lots in strategic places, to be donated to the conferences in which they may be located.
4. Our Ladies' Aid Societies and kindred organizations be enlisted to make annual solicitations for the Parsonage Fund. Where such societies do not exist, that the pastors be requested to appoint one or more of the women of the church to gather funds for it.

Respectfully submitted,

H. S. GABEL, Secretary.

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