

ST. PAULS UNIVERSALIST CHURCH.

HISTORY
OF
ST. PAULS UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
LITTLE FALLS, N. Y.
1851-1901.

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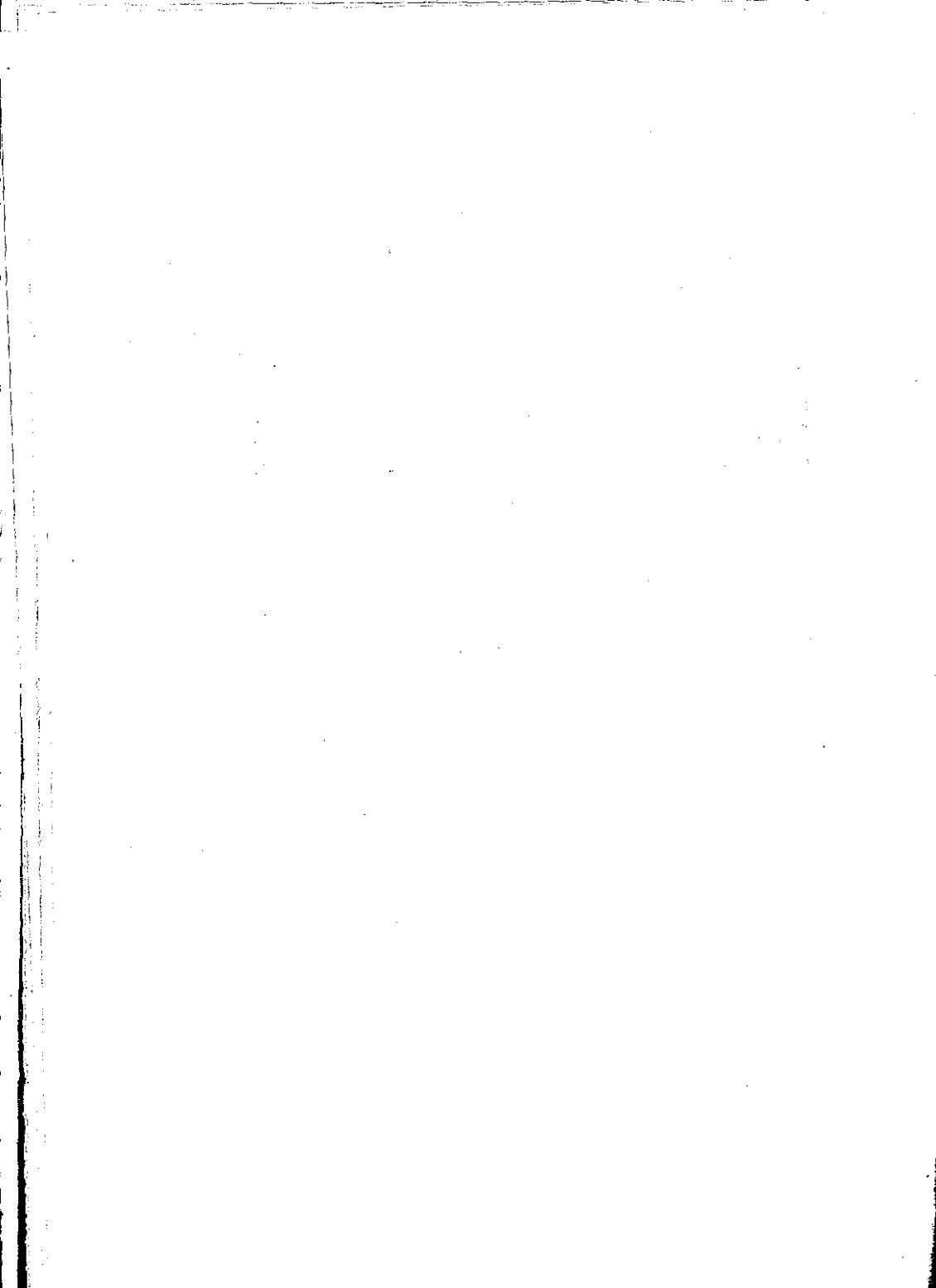
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A PREFATORY WORD.

The occasion of the Semi-Centennial Anniversary of organized Universalism in Little Falls seemed worthy of commemoration, by publishing, in book form, a record of events preceding and succeeding the date of that organization. And as the

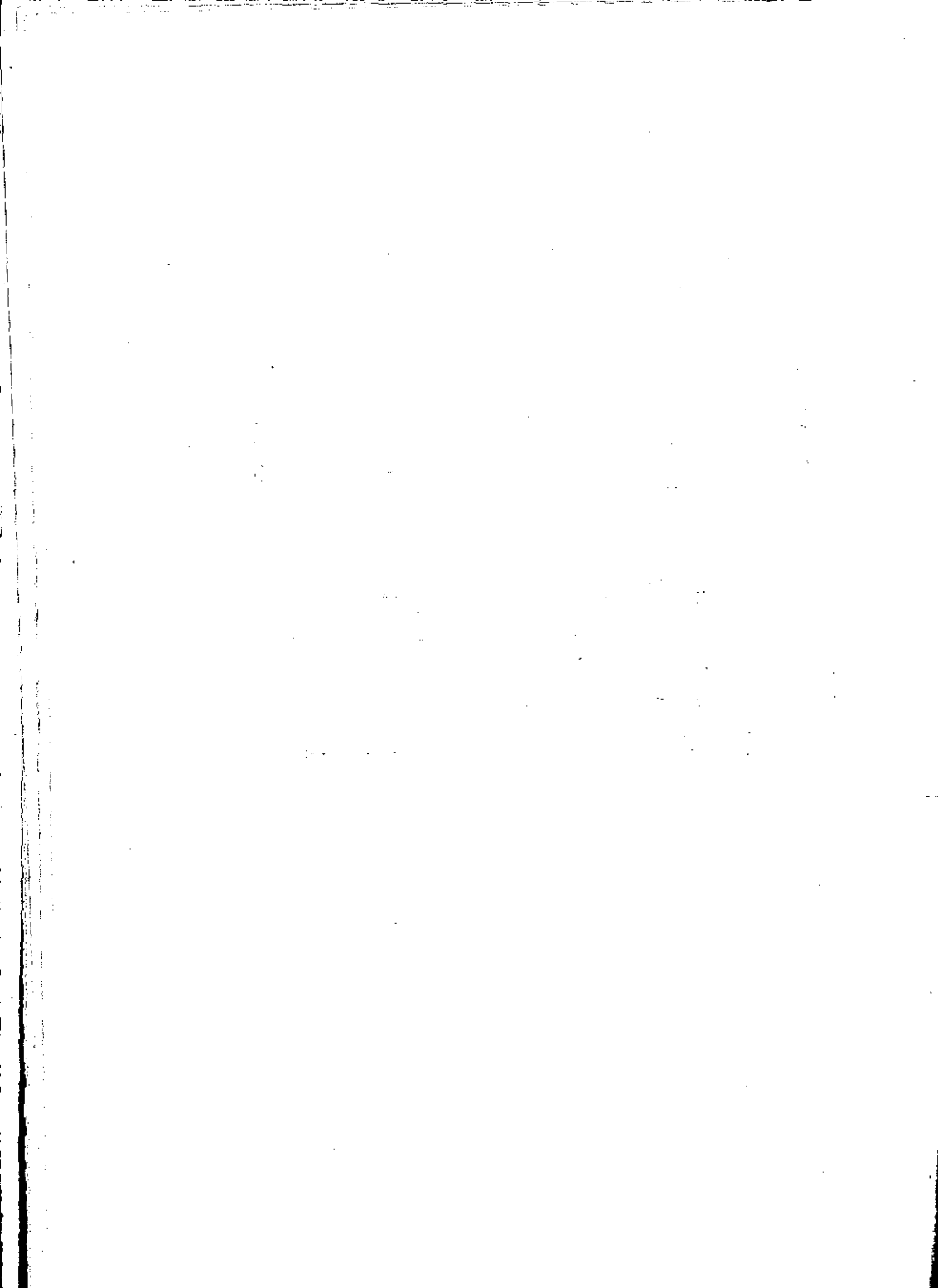
ERRATA.

- Page 11, line 14, for J. R. CHAPMAN read J. K. CHAPMAN.
" 15, last full line, for BROWN read BROWNE.
" 16, line 6, for A. PECK read FRANCIS PECK.
" line 18, for AFFECTED read EFFECTED.
" 17, line 6 from bottom, for THEIR read THE.
" 25, line 18, for COMMITTEE read MEETING.
" 43, line 3, first word, read RELIGION.
" 61, line 5 from bottom, for REV. LOUIS ROBINSON read
REV. LEWIS ROBINSON.

~~Complete record it would have been a valuable record.~~
Such clippings as were preserved by two members of the parish were found very valuable.

It is further suggested that as fast as any organization fills a record book it shall at once be put in the hands of some person, preferably a business man, to be designated by the parish, who shall preserve all such books in his safe. Failure to do this in the past resulted in the loss of one valuable book.

Much of the information in the first chapter has been gleaned from files of the EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE AND GOSPEL ADVOCATE, published in Utica 1825-1848, and for two years more at New York.



A PREFATORY WORD.

The occasion of the Semi-Centennial Anniversary of organized Universalism in Little Falls seemed worthy of commemoration, by publishing, in book form, a record of events preceding and succeeding the date of that organization. And as the editors have sought to gather up the loose threads it has become evident that such a publication was not only fitting but necessary, unless these threads were to be suffered to pass from sight entirely.

The editors would suggest, for the benefit of future historians who will publish a second edition to this volume fifty years hence, that some young member of the parish assume the labor of keeping a record of the interesting and important events as they shall occur, and also a scrap book, in which shall be preserved all newspaper clippings that have reference to the parish. If the present editors could have had access to such a complete record it would have been a veritable mine of wealth. Such clippings as were preserved by two members of the parish were found very valuable.

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The editors wish hereby to express their gratitude to Mrs. Cornelius Crist, of Middleville, Mr. Alexis Johnson, of East Schuyler, Rev. Richard Eddy, D. D., of Chatham, Mass., Mrs. Arnold Eaton, and former pastors, for valuable assistance received; to Stebbins & Burney for access courteously afforded to files of the JOURNAL AND COURIER, to Mr. Myers J. Bucklin for freely making all the photographs that were needed, and to all others who in any way have contributed to the success of the book.

It has been the endeavor of the editors and managers to produce a volume neat in appearance, and at the same time durable; one that every family connected with the church will desire to possess.

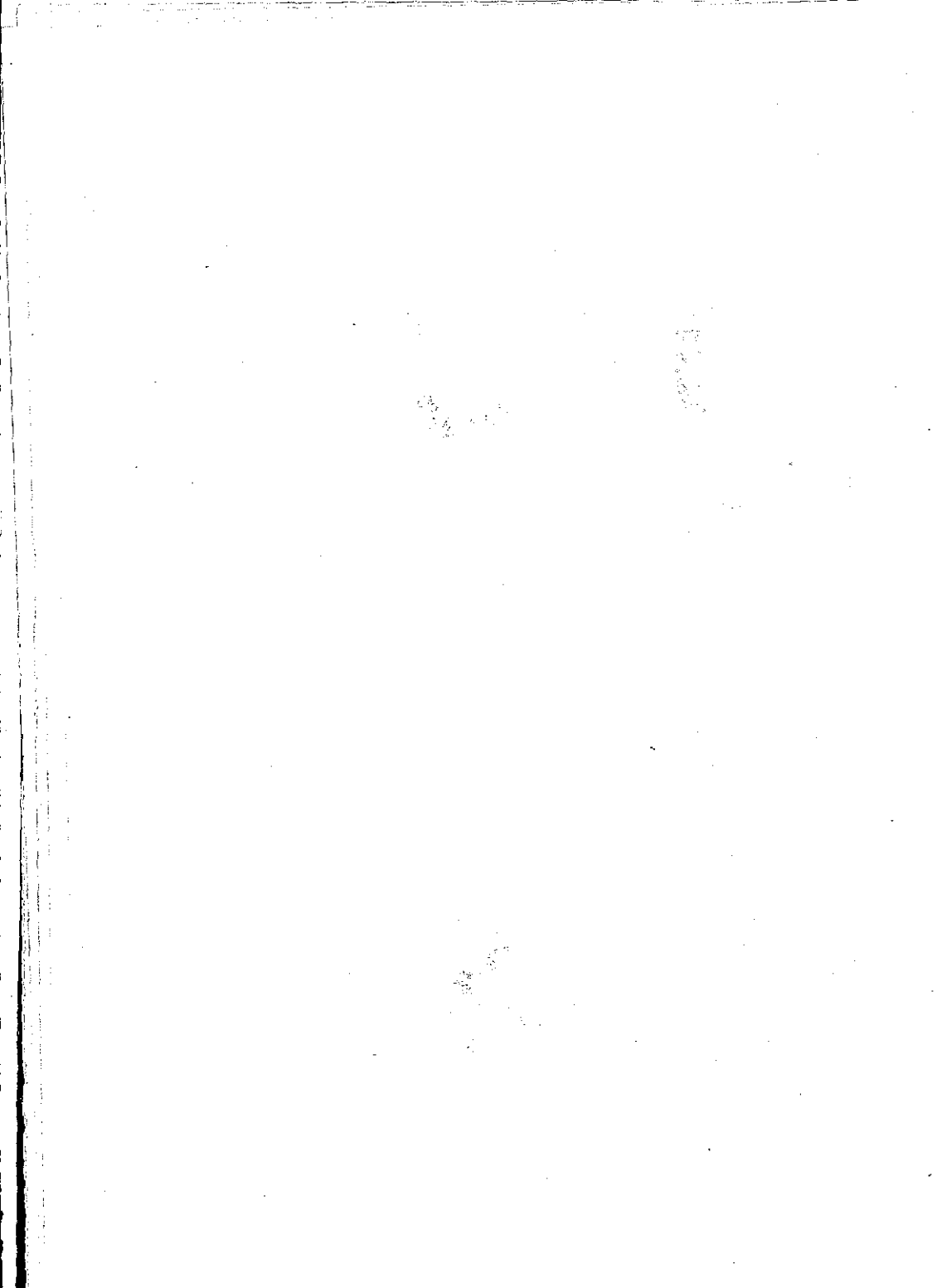
If the book meets the approval of those for whom it is intended, great will be the satisfaction of the

EDITORS AND MANAGERS.

Little Falls, N. Y., April 15, 1901.







HISTORY OF THE PARISH.

—PREPARED BY—

REV. H. E. BENTON.

CHAPTER I.

EVENTS PREVIOUS TO ORGANIZATION IN 1851.

Universalism in Little Falls has had a varied history. Several times it has let its light shine brightly; then the flame has burned low or vanished entirely. But there was always a spark left, smouldering in the hearts of a faithful few, and at last in 1851 that spark kindled a flame which has burned steadily and with ever increasing brilliancy until the present time, and there are no indications of any further decline in its power.

Of the events previous to the final organization in 1851 we are to speak in this first chapter. Records are exceedingly scant, and afford but passing glimpses of conditions then existing. However from what we have found the following account is constructed :

The first knowledge of the Larger Hope to come to the people of Little Falls was probably in the nature of an overflow from Eaton's Bush (now Eatonville), at that time a thriving hamlet, distant only three miles. Sometime between

1814 and 1816 that arch heretic, Hosea Ballou, preached in Eaton's Bush, and the occasion must have attracted the attention of people in Little Falls. Soon after, about 1818, Dolphus Skinner began that occasional ministration which he continued for many years.

The seed planted there must have found a fertile soil, for we hear of preaching more or less frequent from that time until the village itself began to decay about 1865; a society was organized, which at one time was very flourishing; association meetings were often held there, and in 1844 a new church was dedicated, in which the Universalists had a half-interest, the other half being divided between the Methodists and Baptists.

How much effect all this had on Little Falls is not known. There is an occasional record of a minister preaching at Eaton's Bush in the morning and at Little Falls in the evening; and sometimes the evening service is called a lecture. About the time the church was built families from Little Falls occasionally drove there to attend service; one of the families was that of L. O. Gay. But after all it seems probable that the church there did little more than keep the interest at Little Falls alive during those seasons when to all outward appearance it had died out; but there appears no evidence that the Little Falls movement was the child of that at Eaton's Bush, as for example—Dolgeville was the child of Little Falls.

Bearing in mind then, that there was this outside pressure brought to bear more or less constantly, we turn now directly to the consideration of events here.

From 1823 to 1825 and possibly a little longer, Rev. George B. Lisher lived at Little Falls and preached occasionally. These dates are fixed, as on June 21, 1823, he began the publication of a small paper called the GOSPEL INQUIRER, which appeared every other Saturday. We have no evidence now that more than one volume was published, although the issue of June 5, 1824, gives the prospectus for the second volume. Some circumstance must have suddenly arisen that caused the discontinuance of the paper, and its merging, with others, in the UNIVERSALIST, published at first in Utica, and afterwards in Philadelphia.

However, we know that Mr. Lisher continued his residence here for some time after, as the EVANGELICAL RESTORATIONIST, published at Troy, issue of 1825, announces him as its agent in this place.

His work here must have borne some fruit, as in the GOSPEL INQUIRER, under date of July 19, 1823, appears the following in the minutes of the Western Association, which convened at Fly Creek, Otsego county, June 4 and 5:—"Received requests from societies recently formed in the villages of Little Falls and Salisbury, Herkimer county, to be received into fellowship

with this Association. Voted to grant said requests."

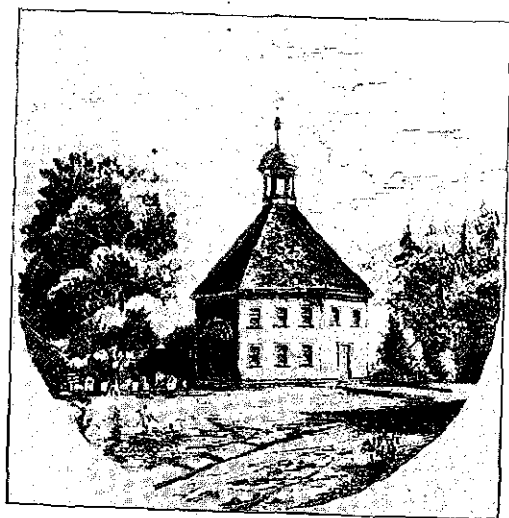
But the society does not appear to have flourished long; indeed, it is reported that Mr. Lisher committed some acts which brought him into disfavor with the Universalists, and the result to a weak society must have been very disastrous.

At any rate we have no further record of meetings being held until 1830, when signs of life again appear, and several services were conducted by itinerant preachers. The meetings increased in frequency during the following years until 1836. Indeed there undoubtedly would have been more preaching had there been a larger supply of preachers. In the *EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE AND GOSPEL ADVOCATE*, published at Utica, appear from time to time, articles deploring the lack of ministers, and stating that "many calls for supplies have to be denied because there are none to send in response."

The available ministers seem to have covered as wide a field as possible. Scarcely any of them were "settled" anywhere, but every Sunday and often on week days they were holding services in school houses, public halls, and sometimes in an "orthodox" church. Very likely the poverty of the societies was an influential cause of this universal itinerancy, yet it served to spread the knowledge of Universalism, although at the same time denying to any place the amount it would have desired.



STONE SCHOOL HOUSE.



OCTAGON CHURCH.

Thus it was that the thirsty Universalist souls in Little Falls were made glad by an occasional repast; and with that they were often obliged to be content for months at a time.

Possibly there may have been a minister resident here early in the '30s, for in the *MAGAZINE AND ADVOCATE*, issue of Sept. 5, 1835, is the statement that "Rev. Dan Tenny, late of Little Falls, has left for Ohio." But we learn nothing more concerning him.

In 1836 preaching becomes less frequent, and after that date the voice of the Universalist preacher is no more heard in the village for several years.

But, although sleeping, Universalism was not dead, and in the fall of 1842 M. M. Ransom, with eight others, clubbed together to hire Dolphus Skinner and Aaron B. Grosh to preach alternately, once in two weeks. The first sermon was preached by Dolphus Skinner, October 2, in the old stone school house.

There is an incident connected with this service that is rather interesting. As Mr. Ransom was refused the use of the church, he went to William Girvan, an old Scotchman, then chairman of the trustees of the district, and asked him for the key to the school house. The Scotchman declined to deliver it, on the ground that it would be "encouraging heresy;" to which Mr. Ransom replied, "If you consider yourself a Christian, we shall expect the key; if you don't, we shan't." The key was produced forthwith.

Before the next meeting permission was obtained to use the old Octagon Church, which stood on the site of the present Church street school, and shortly after when Washington Hall—now the Getman House—was completed, the meetings were transferred to that place. Possibly the atmosphere in the old church was not just agreeable to the Universalist sense.

During this time, Mr. Ransom's house on Mill street, where the grist mill now stands, was headquarters for the ministers, and the choir always rehearsed there before going to the service. The music was furnished by a little, old-fashioned melodeon, (new-fashioned then) shaped like a long, narrow box, which was carried about from place to place, and when in use was placed on a table.

The first organist was little Lucy Gay, (now Mrs. J. H. Bucklin) a lass of only 9 or 10 years—so small she had to stand on a stool to reach the melodeon. Thus did she begin those duties as organist which she continued until her resignation in 1873, although an untoward accident nearly brough her life to an untimely end. Her home was at Jacksonburg, about three miles from the village. Returning one Friday from town along the tow-path, which Mr. Gay usually chose as the shorter and better road, the horse was frightened by a woman in a red cloak, and plunged down the bank into the canal. No one was hurt and they thought nothing more of it; but evidently a nut was loosened, for as they

were returning from service the next Sunday a wheel came off without any warning, and the occupants of the carriage—Mr. Gay, Lucy and her cousin, (afterwards Mrs. Potter)—were thrown into the canal. Mr. Gay was entangled in the reins and dragged some distance, but freeing himself he swam back to the rescue. Lucy was nowhere to be seen—but in response to his call, though beneath the water, she began to wave her hands so that eddies were formed in the water. Mr. Gay reached down, grasped her wrist and drew her to the surface. Meanwhile the captain of a canal barge had come to their rescue, and with him on one side and Mr. Gay on the other, the girls were brought safely to land.

As a result of the inspiring preaching of those earnest fathers in the faith—Skinner and Grosh—great interest was aroused, and in the *MAGAZINE AND ADVOCATE* for October 20, 1843, is the following notice:—"A meeting of the believers and friends of the doctrine of Universal Salvation will be holden at Little Falls (at the Public Hall) on Saturday, 28th. inst., at 2 o'clock P. M., for the purpose of organizing a Universalist Society. All friends in the village and vicinity are requested to attend."

Whether or not the meeting was ever held we have not been able to learn; if it was nothing resulted except that the leaders evidently became discouraged, for during the next few years there was but little preaching except by supplies, mainly Anderson, Hicks and Hathaway. Of the

last named it is related that he once said "The orthodox ministers preach to keep people out of hell; I preach to keep hell out of the people."

During the summer of 1846, several meetings were held by Dolphus Skinner in the grove that stood, until quite recently, in the rear of the building now used by the Armour Packing Co. On Sept. 27 of the same year Father Skinner (as he was called) came, at the request of the trustees of the district, to dedicate the new school house on the south side of the river. How different from his first coming to the village, four years before. The honor conferred upon him indicates that he was respected by all as a man and a preacher.

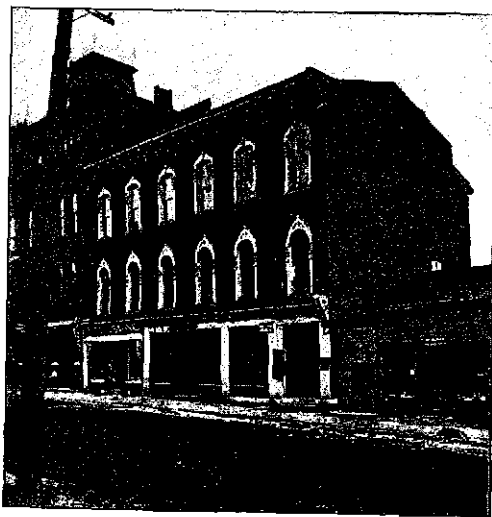
During the next two years the names of J. H. Tuttle, J. H. Philleo, J. H. Harter, and J. M. Austin appear as supplies. In 1848 the flame began to burn brighter once more, and in the fall of that year, or early in the next, J. H. Harter settled here as the first pastor.

On February 22 and 23, 1849, the Mohawk Association met here for the first time; and it may cause surprise to learn that it was held in the Baptist Church. However this was not the first time that the doors of an Orthodox Church were opened to the Universalists, for previous to this both the Baptist and Methodist Churches had been used by them for funeral services.

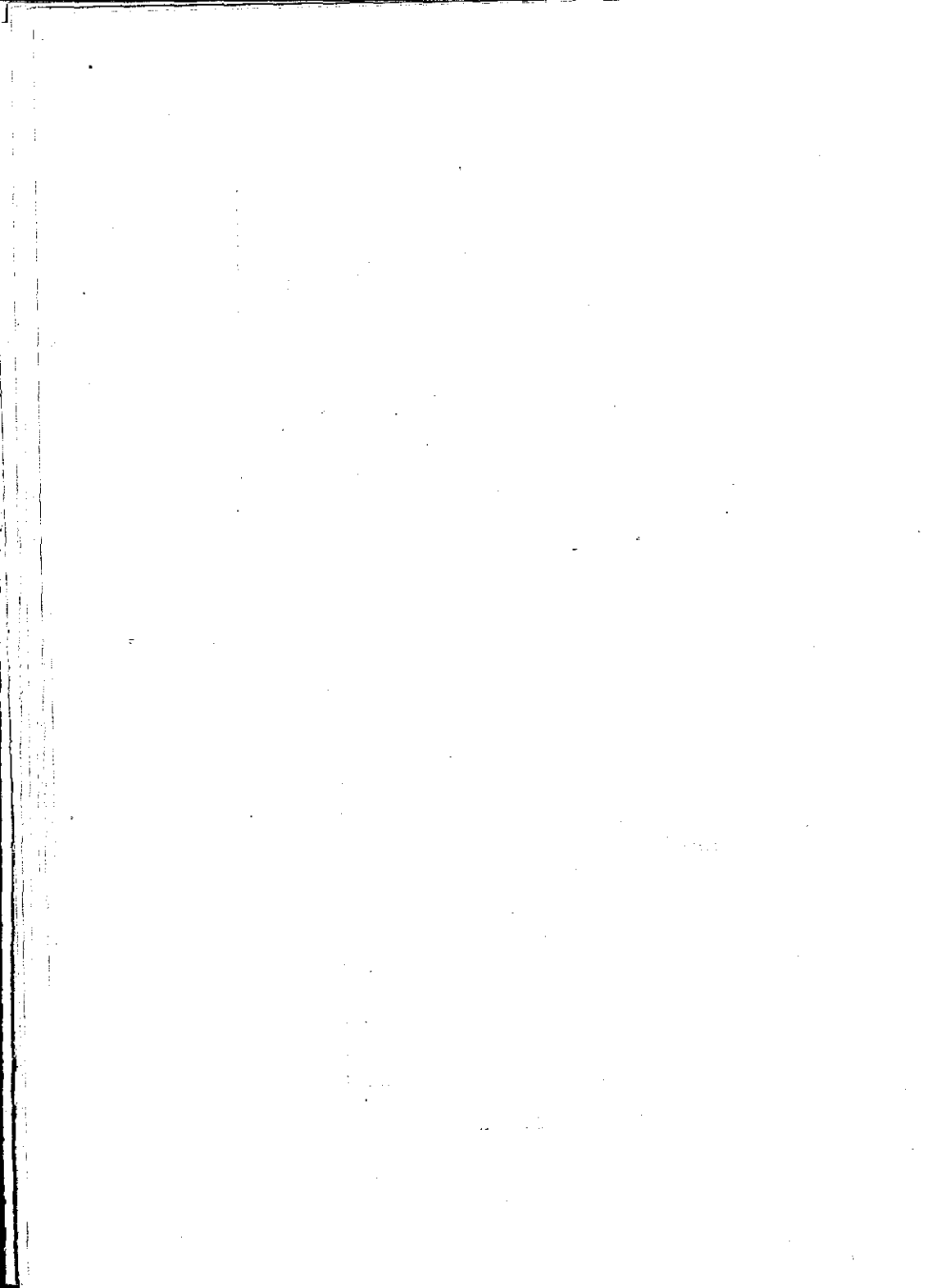
During the winter of 1848-9 Temperance Hall was completed. It was erected by the Sons of Temperance, a secret organization, who used



WASHINGTON HALL.



TEMPERANCE HALL.



the third floor for their meetings, rented the first for stores, and made the second into a hall which was used during the week for dances and parties, and was rented to the Universalists on Sunday. This was the home of the fathers and mothers of our church until the present edifice was erected.

Thus closes what we may call the first period in the history of Universalism at Little Falls.



CHAPTER II.

ORGANIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT.

The year 1851 will ever be remembered in the annals of Little Falls Universalism, for in that year, under the leadership of Rev. J. H. Harter, a permanent organization was effected.

On two Sabbaths preceding April 19, the following announcement, which bears the date of Mch. 22, 1851, was read from the desk in Temperance Hall:—"Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the male persons of full age, belonging to the congregation of Universalists, who now statedly attend in this place for Divine worship, will be held in this place, on Saturday, April 19th, 1851, at 3 o'clock P. M., for the purpose of electing not less than three, nor more than nine, discreet persons of said congregation as Trustees, to take in charge the Estate and Property belonging to said congregation, and to transact all affairs relative to the temporalities thereof, according to the statute, to provide for the incorporation of Religious Societies.

J. H. HARTER,

Minister of said Congregation."

For some reason the attendance at that meeting was very small, consequently it was ad-

journed until May the 3d, at 6 P. M., when a sufficient number assembled, and the meeting organized by choosing M. M. Ransom and Charles Lewis, Chairmen, and J. H. Harter, Secretary. Rev. A. Peck offered prayer, after which it was voted "that we organize a Universalist Society in the village of Rockton" (as it was then called) "and that we proceed to the election of nine Trustees." Following are the names of the first board of trustees and their terms of office, which were decided by lot:

ONE YEAR.—M. M. Ransom, A. Zoller, C. Benedict.

TWO YEARS.—L. O. Gay, J. R. Chapman, O. Angel.

THREE YEARS.—W. B. Houghton, L. W. Gray, A. Fuller.

These and their successors were to constitute "the First Universalist Society" of Rockton, Herkimer Co., N. Y.

Thus was the infant organization launched; small was it and weakly manned—but there were in it stout and courageous hearts, deep faith and ready hands; therefore in safety did it weather all the storms of adversity until as a result of the loyalty evinced, more adherents were attracted to the standard, and the organization increased in numbers and power. But we cannot bestow too much honor upon this pioneer band, to whose fidelity our church is due.

On the 5th day of May, M. M. Ransom, Charles Lewis and J. H. Harter appeared before H.

Thompson, Justice of the Peace, and executed a certificate of incorporation, which was filed in the County Clerk's office on the next day.

The work was not suffered to lag, and on May 17 another meeting was held, at which the constitution was presented by the committee which had been appointed for the purpose, and adopted. This instrument, with but few changes, has served to govern the parish for 50 years; thus does it testify to the wisdom of its authors.

Thus organized they were ready for the election of members, and the following were chosen "charter members" of the new society:—J. H. Harter, M. M. Ransom, L. O. Gay, A. Fuller, Asa Wilcox, L. W. Gray, A. Zoller, J. K. Chapman, J. H. Wilcox, S. L. Partridge and S. Petrie.

The next thing in order was to procure recognition among the sister churches in the Association; consequently L. O. Gay and Asa Wilcox were chosen delegates to the next session of the Mohawk Association at Frankfort, and were instructed to petition that the "First Universalist Society" of Rockton be admitted to fellowship.

Rev. J. H. Harter remained with the society only long enough to see the desire of his heart gratified, and then resigned, and at the meeting of May 17 it became necessary to appoint a committee "to confer with some Universalist minister to become its pastor."

It seems particularly unfortunate that a parish but just out of its swaddling clothes should be

left without a pastor; and the fact that it not only held its own but gained in power, testifies emphatically to the ability and zeal of its leaders.

June 8th more members were elected, and among them appear the names of the first women, (who, in those days, could be dispensed with no better than to-day.) As the readers of this book may desire to have these names they are here given:—Messrs. Wm. B. Houghton, B. K. Houghton, L. F. Pepper, Wells Sponable, J. W. Cronkhite, John Bielby, Levi W. Brown, Mrs. L. O. Gay, Miss E. Gay, Mrs. J. K. Chapman, Mrs. R. Campbell, Mrs. M. M. Ransom, Mrs. A. Fuller, Mrs. E. Miller, Mrs. L. W. Gray, Mrs. Harder and Mrs. M. Burt. These, with the others previously elected to membership, represented some 20 or 21 families, probably very nearly the total active working force in the parish. Verily, from what small beginnings have we grown! All these first members have passed away, but the parish as it now stands is a monument to their memory.

In those days pastorless parishes were not besieged with letters from clergymen desiring to receive a call, as at present. Ministers were too few and too much in demand. Often parish committees had to search for someone to become pastor, and not seldom months might intervene before one was secured.

But the infant parish was quite fortunate in this, and was obliged to wait only until Septem-

ber before obtaining the services of a minister in the person of T. J. Whitcomb. He was engaged to preach on alternate Sundays—part of the time two sermons, and the remainder one, in the evening—for which he was to receive the amount of the subscriptions, amounting to the munificent sum of \$110 or \$115. However, he was to be entitled to a donation.

Whether this arrangement endured for one year or two is not recorded, but in September, 1853, arrangements were made with Rev. B. Hobbs to preach during the pleasure of the society. If he remained the full year he was to receive the amount of the subscriptions for the year, if a shorter time, then his compensation was to be proportionate to the length of his stay. The committee must have had some premonition that he would remain only a short time, hence this arrangement; and in fact, on account of ill health, he closed his labors in July, 1854.

This same month witnessed the next important step forward in the history of the parish. As the Sons of Temperance had never been able to pay for the hall they erected, it was offered at sheriff's sale and was purchased by the Universalists for \$3850. They came into possession October 22, 1855.

In November, 1854, Rev. G. W. Skinner was engaged at \$6 per Sabbath to preach two discourses until the 1st of March, 1855; at that time he proposed to stay a year for the same compensation, giving one sermon per Sunday during the

summer and fall, and two during the winter. The parish demurred somewhat, doubting their ability to raise this amount, whereupon he assumed the risk, agreeing to accept whatever might be left from the weekly collection, after paying hall rent, fuel and light.

Even before the society came into possession of Temperance Hall, a committee was appointed to consider what improvements would be necessary, and as soon as the hall was theirs it was transformed into a chapel; pews, gallery and pulpit were put in; (the pulpit is now used as a table in the library of the Sunday School room) and the room was papered and painted. Rev. Mr. Skinner took upon himself the raising of the money for these last two items, being about \$75.

In June, 1856, all was ready and the chapel was dedicated. Rev. Mr. Skinner was ordained and installed at the same time, Dolphus Skinner and A. D. Mayo officiating.

But no sooner did they seem well settled than they were again without a pastor; however, Rev. B. B. Halleck was hired immediately, but he remained for only about a year and a half, and in 1859 was succeeded by Rev. J. R. Sage. At his suggestion, a service of installation was held on June 30, as it was thought it might benefit the cause, and a conference meeting was appended thereto. The clergymen officiating were W. G. Anderson, L. C. Brown, C. C. Gordon and Seth Jones.

We can learn but little of events that occurred during these years, so scant are the records, but we do know that the parish felt the weight of the war; its minister resigned in 1862 and enlisted, first as private and then as chaplain, and his successor, Rev. A. Peck, was engaged simply to supply once in two weeks, preaching one sermon per day. Parish affairs, like all things else, were subordinate to the interests of the nation.

But in 1863 the tide turned once more, and Orello Cone, a young man who had just been graduated from Canton Theological School, was engaged, and entered upon his work in August. He was the second minister to be ordained in the parish.

It was under his leadership that a church organization was affected. On October 10, 1863, those interested gathered in Temperance Hall, and thirty-three were received into the fellowship of the church by Rev. Dolphus Skinner. Of this number only two, Mr. and Mrs. James H. Bucklin, are now living among us; two joined the Episcopal church, a few are living in other places, and the remainder have gone to join the great majority. At the present time there are 422 names on the roll; of these about 320 are still living.

For some time the people had felt that they needed a better church home. At first a committee was appointed which undertook to raise money to give the chapel the appearance of a



church, while keeping the lower story for rent, but the majority would not be satisfied with anything short of a new church; consequently a subscription list was started in which those whose names were affixed pledged themselves to pay the sums set opposite their names on the condition that \$10,000 should first be pledged. The list was headed by the Ladies' Social Circle with \$1,000; then followed James H. Bucklin, \$600; L. O. Gay, \$500; Charles Benedict \$500; J. W. Cronkhite, \$500; William B. Houghton, \$500; Moses Petrie, \$500; George Keller, \$300; B. K. Houghton, \$300; B. Rathbun, \$200, &c.

There were many subscriptions running down into small sums of one dollar and two dollars. Everybody was interested and wished to help. Even among the orthodox people this interest was felt, and a member of the Presbyterian church made a small contribution, saying that he wished to pay for one brick in the new church.

By far the larger part of the list of names has been lost, and no one seems to remember whether or not the full \$10,000 was subscribed as stipulated. It either was, or the subscribers were all so loyal that no one wished to avail himself of their failure as an excuse for non-payment, as the total amount pledged was collected.

Of course one important question was—where shall the church be built? And no site seemed better than the lot at the corner of Albany and Mary streets. Consequently on November 1,

1865, the trustees closed a bargain with the owner, J. A. Owen, by which for the sum of \$3,000 they came into possession of the lot.

But this act immediately precipitated a discussion. Some were violently opposed to the location on account of its proximity to the Baptist church, and they pressed their point very vigorously, so much so indeed, that the trustees felt compelled to discuss the matter at one of their meetings, when it was decided by a vote of 5 to 2 to build on the lot secured; and we hear no more of opposition.

Now that the people were aroused they could brook no delay, and steps were taken to commence work the current year (1867). Charles Benedict, B. K. Houghton and James H. Bucklin were appointed a building committee. But haste was suffered to be no excuse for waste or extravagance, and the committee was given emphatic instructions not to let the total cost exceed \$10,000; as usual, however, they estimated too small an amount, for the building when completed cost nearer \$20,000.

August 1, 1867, was a red-letter day—for it saw the laying of the corner stone of this temple of Universalism. Much was made of the occasion. The Sunday School, members of the society, visiting friends and citizens formed a procession, which, headed by the Citizens Brass Band, left the chapel at 2 o'clock and marched to the location of the church. There Rev. Dolphus

Skinner offered an impressive prayer, and then proceeded to enumerate the articles which were placed in a glass case and deposited beneath the corner stone. Among the articles were:—Lists of the trustees and officers of the parish; of the Sunday School officers, teachers and scholars; of the subscribers to the erection fund of the church; of village officers, &c. After the jar was carefully deposited in the place prepared for it, Rev. Mr. Skinner gave an address, which was characterized as "one of his happiest efforts." To conclude the exercises a hymn prepared for the occasion was sung.

If those who to-day frequent the church erected on that spot could go back to that day their eyes would rest upon a very different scene. The Baptist church was standing on the opposite corner, but at the east there was only one house on the street, beside a little yellow house that stood on the church site. The site itself was but little better than a swamp, and in excavating for the basement old stumps and quantities of black mud were removed.

After the laying of the corner stone work went on apace, and early in the spring the church was ready for dedication.

During the time covered by the movement that resulted in the building of the church several ministerial changes were effected. Rev. Orello Cone resigned in August, 1865, and Rev. A. Tibbetts was engaged in May of the following year.

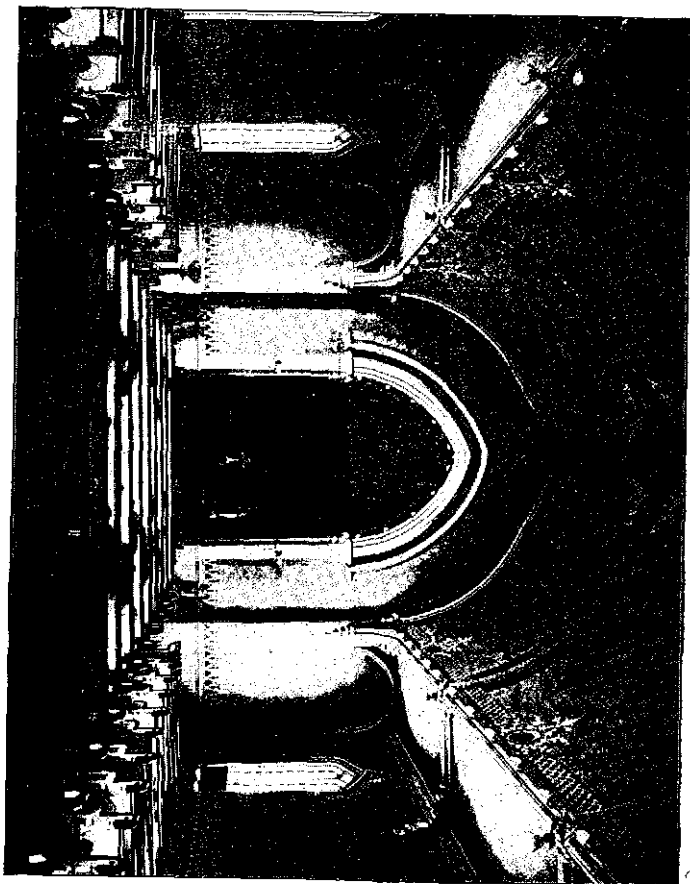
His term ended the last of May, 1867, and in July Rev. L. Holmes was engaged, to begin the first of October, 1867.

After the site for the new church was purchased, the trustees sold the chapel to I. M. Walrath for \$6,000. The Sons of Temperance had given a mortgage for \$1,781 to some parties in Albany, which the trustees had never paid, so that amount had to be deducted from the \$6,000 received from the sale.

As the church neared completion a name and furnishings came up for consideration. At a meeting held May 2, the name "Divine Love" was adopted. But many expressing dissatisfaction therewith, the congregation was asked to remain after the morning service on May 4 and the name was changed to "St. Pauls."

A committee was appointed to procure a peal of bells, but when put in position they proved so discordant that they were rejected and a single bell of equal weight was substituted.

After the ladies had furnished the audience room the church was ready for dedication. The date fixed upon was June 9. But when the day arrived it almost seemed that there would be no dedication after all, as some of the members were opposed to dedicating to God a building encumbered with a debt. After all moneys subscribed had been paid in, including \$2,000 given by the General Convention, there still remained about \$2,000 uncovered. But Rev. D. C. Tom-



CHURCH INTERIOR.

linson (father of Rev. V. E. Tomlinson) was present, and by his persuasive minute speeches so aroused the people that during the day \$1,000 was pledged, and the outlook was so bright for an immediate payment of the remainder, that in the evening the service of dedication was held. In the afternoon of that day Rev. Lucius Holmes had been formally installed. It was a great day for Universalism in Little Falls. Faithful labor had won its reward.

THE CHRISTIAN AMBASSADOR, published in New York, thus speaks of the church:—"A culmination in visible form of many years of zealous toil and hope deferred; a memorial of ultimate triumph over great difficulties; a pledge of renewed enthusiasm, and of more cheerful and hopeful endeavor to advance the kingdom of God on earth."

Everyone now was thoroughly aroused and when the church was opened almost every seat was taken, and a large sum was realized from pew rentals.

In accordance with the agreement made with the General Convention, when it gave \$2,000 toward the church, the parish began immediately to pay its annual quota, a practice which it has since faithfully continued, thus recognizing its obligations to the larger church.

June 14, 1868, occurred the first dedication of infants in the new church—Harry W. Houghton and Jessie Bucklin being presented at the altar.

For nearly three years longer their first pastor in the new church, Rev. Lucius Holmes, remained with them, ministering over them wisely and benevolently. His work was finished May 7, 1871, and Rev. George P. Hibbard was at once secured. He stayed until October, 1872, when he resigned to enter the Episcopal ministry. The pulpit was filled by supplies until the following May, when Rev. H. D. L. Webster began his pastorate.

Although they were perfectly satisfied with their new church home, the people all felt that a pipe organ was a necessity. Consequently in 1872 a committee was appointed to raise funds for that purpose. By subscription, an apron sale, a singing school conducted by Mrs. J. H. Bucklin, and an organ recital given when the instrument was installed, the amount was secured.

In May of the following year Mrs. Bucklin, who had officiated faithfully as organist since the time she had played the melodeon in Washington Hall, resigned her position, amid universal regret.

The pastorate of Mr. Webster was one especially pleasant to all concerned, therefore it was with genuine grief that the parish received on August, 10, 1874, the resignation which he felt obliged to make on account of ill health, and very cordial resolutions were adopted.

Again there was an interim until April, 1875, when Rev. H. A. Hanaford was engaged. He remained until October, 1877, when he resigned

and entered the Congregationalist church. Rev. E. F. Pember was immediately asked to fill out the year, which ended in March, 1878, when he was re-engaged at an increased salary.

At his suggestion, although some opposed, the old method of renting pews was abandoned, and the present system of free pews and envelopes was adopted, and the increased receipts justified the change at once.

As the kitchen in the church needed a supply of tinware, on the Monday evening following the tenth anniversary of the dedication of the church a tin wedding was held in the vestry, and funds raised with which to purchase the necessary articles. Soon after this the church was painted on the outside, and the walls of the auditorium re-decorated.

This pastorate was one of the most successful up to that time, and the parish prospered in all departments. But Mr. Pember was needed elsewhere, and in November, 1881, he resigned to become state missionary.

Rev. Selden Gilbert was secured at Mr. Pember's suggestion, and began his work at once. During his term more attention was given to the Sunday School library than theretofore. It was enlarged, new departments were added, and new cases were built. In May, 1884, the number of trustees was reduced from nine to six, consequently none were elected that year.

Mr. Gilbert closed his pastorate the following September, and supplies occupied the pulpit

until Rev. R. E. Sykes, who had been hired, was graduated from Canton. He took up his work immediately, and November 20 was ordained and installed—Rev. I. M. Atwood, D. D., preaching the sermon, Rev. O. A. Rounds offering the prayer, and Prof. Forbes, of Canton, giving the charge to the candidate. Then began the longest and one of the pleasantest pastorates the parish has known. As the years went by until ten had been rounded out, pastor and people drew closer together until, when he decided to accept the call to Denver, the parish felt itself almost prostrated.

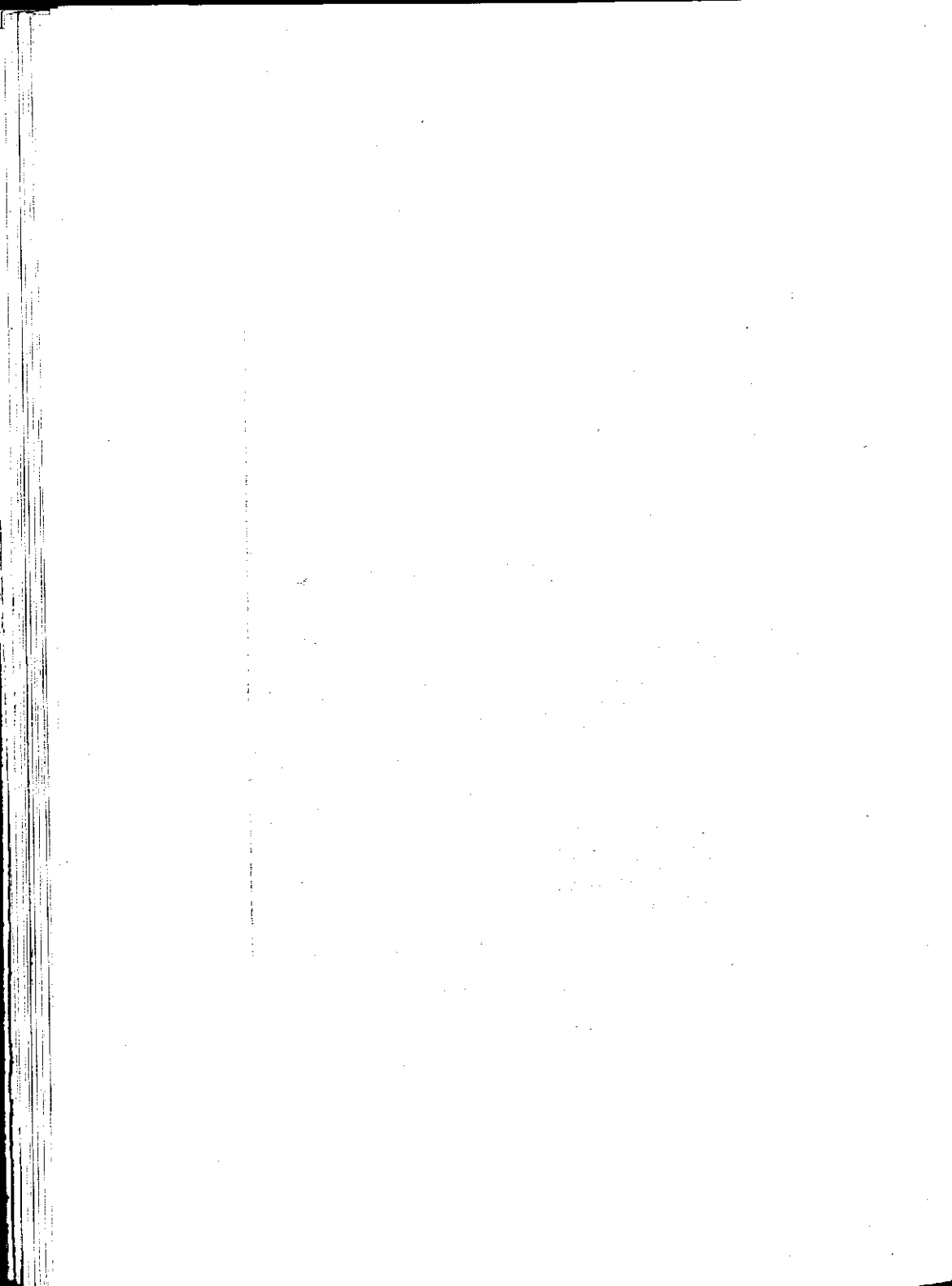
During his pastorate the gallery in the church was extended out three feet, the outside of the church was painted and water put in. A legacy of \$1,000 was received by will of W. B. Houghton, which was called the Houghton Music Fund; the annual meeting was again changed to the first Wednesday following the last Sunday in March; and Mr. Sykes himself solicited the money with which the piano in the vestry was purchased.

Mr. Sykes had a large circle of friends outside the limits of the parish; he was Chaplain of the Rifle Corps and the Royal Arcanum, and was tendered a farewell reception by this latter organization. His pastorate closed in May, 1895, amid universal expressions of regret.

At the suggestion of Mr. Sykes, the same meeting which accepted his resignation voted unanimously to extend a call to Rev. V. E. Tom-



REV. R. E. SYKES.



linson, then settled at Hudson, N. Y. Mr. Tomlinson accepted the invitation and entered upon his duties in May, 1895. Thus the parish was saved the loss of power inevitable to a long interregnum.

A long felt need in the parish had been a suitable residence for the minister; consequently shortly after the new pastorate began, the trustees held a meeting in the office of Howell & Taylor to discuss the matter of a parsonage. The sentiment was unanimous that the time to act had come; it was voted, therefore, to purchase the lot on Gansevoort street, owned by Mrs. W. H. H. Lintner, and N. E. Ransom, Oscar Taylor and J. P. Harvey were appointed a building committee, with instructions to procure plans. The bargain with Mrs. Lintner was immediately closed, and a special committee of the parish was called on January 21, 1896, to take further action. N. E. Ransom reported, for the committee, that the lot had cost \$2,625, which amount had been nearly covered by \$1,000 received from the will of W. B. Houghton, the interest of which had been used for music, and \$1,000 the gift of Mrs. S. K. Houghton. Plans had been drawn and the committee had hoped to begin building in the fall, but owing to unsatisfactory bids and other hindrances, the work had been unavoidably delayed. Mr. Ransom feeling obliged to resign from the committee, Mr. George Shall was appointed substitute. The committee was instructed to proceed with the work as vig-

orously as possible, and another committee of five was appointed to solicit funds.

In the spring ground was broken and by October the house was ready for occupancy. The committee had done its work well, and as a result the parish has a parsonage convenient, commodious and beautiful, a building of which it may well be proud. The house was formally opened by a reception on the afternoon and evening of October 14, 1896.

The cost was \$2,625 for the lot and \$5,400 for house, making a total of \$8,025. To meet this a mortgage of \$4,000 was placed on the church lot, and \$500 was borrowed of E. J. Diefendorf; the balance—except the \$2,000 already mentioned—was raised by subscription. The note of \$500 was paid during the spring of 1899. The mortgage of \$4,000 still stands, but a movement is on foot at the present writing (April, 1901) to liquidate it, in whole or in part, before the new half century shall begin on May 3.

This pastorate witnessed in 1899 the passing away of Mr. Charles Benedict, who had been a trustee continuously from the organization of the parish in 1851, and who in April, 1896, had been elected to that office for life. Thoroughly interested in the church, much of its success had been due to his earnest labors.

In June of the same year the parish was made the recipient of a gift of \$1,000, due to the generosity of Miss M. E. Tillotson, of Cazenovia,

N. Y. The conditions of the gift were as follows:—The interest should be used

1. To purchase certain memorials to the donor's mother.
2. To adorn the church property or grounds.
3. In case of emergency, by vote of a majority at a parish meeting, the principal could be used for any purpose deemed wise.

The money was used to take up \$1,000 of the mortgage on the church, Mr. J. I. Zoller was appointed trustee, and it was voted to use the interest to purchase such pulpit furniture as might be needed.

This pastorate witnessed a commendable activity in all departments of the parish. A Sunshine Circle of Kings Daughters, consisting of the older girls of the Sunday School, was organized in 1896, and a Junior Y. P. C. U. in 1897; both these organizations, after a season of usefulness, are now dormant; the Sunday School increased its membership, and additions were made to the list of subscribers to parish expenses. Mr. Tomlinson interested himself in the work of the Y. P. C. U. and established the Central District Association on a more efficient basis.

Besides being much beloved by his parish, Mr. Tomlinson, like his predecessor, filled a large place in the community life, and there were the same expressions of sorrow when his pastorate closed in April, 1900.

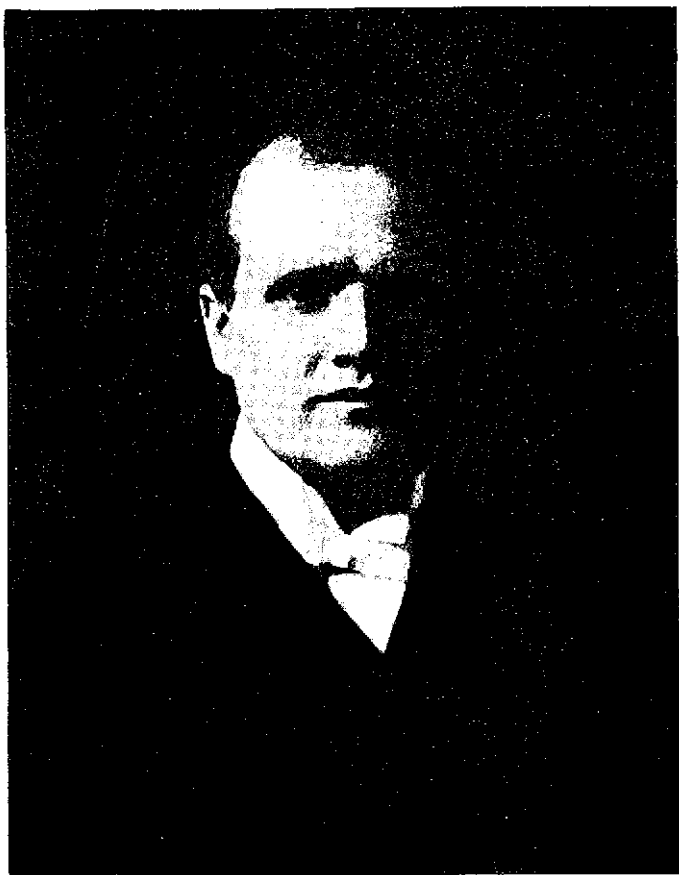
The work at Dolgeville, begun by Rev. R. E.

Sykes, was successfully continued during Mr. Tomlinson's administration; but the Little Falls parish felt that the duties here were sufficiently exacting to demand the whole time of the minister, and as the transition from one pastorate to another seemed a good time to make a change, it was voted at the parish meeting held April 11, that Little Falls make arrangements to have its own pastor, separate and distinct from Dolgeville.

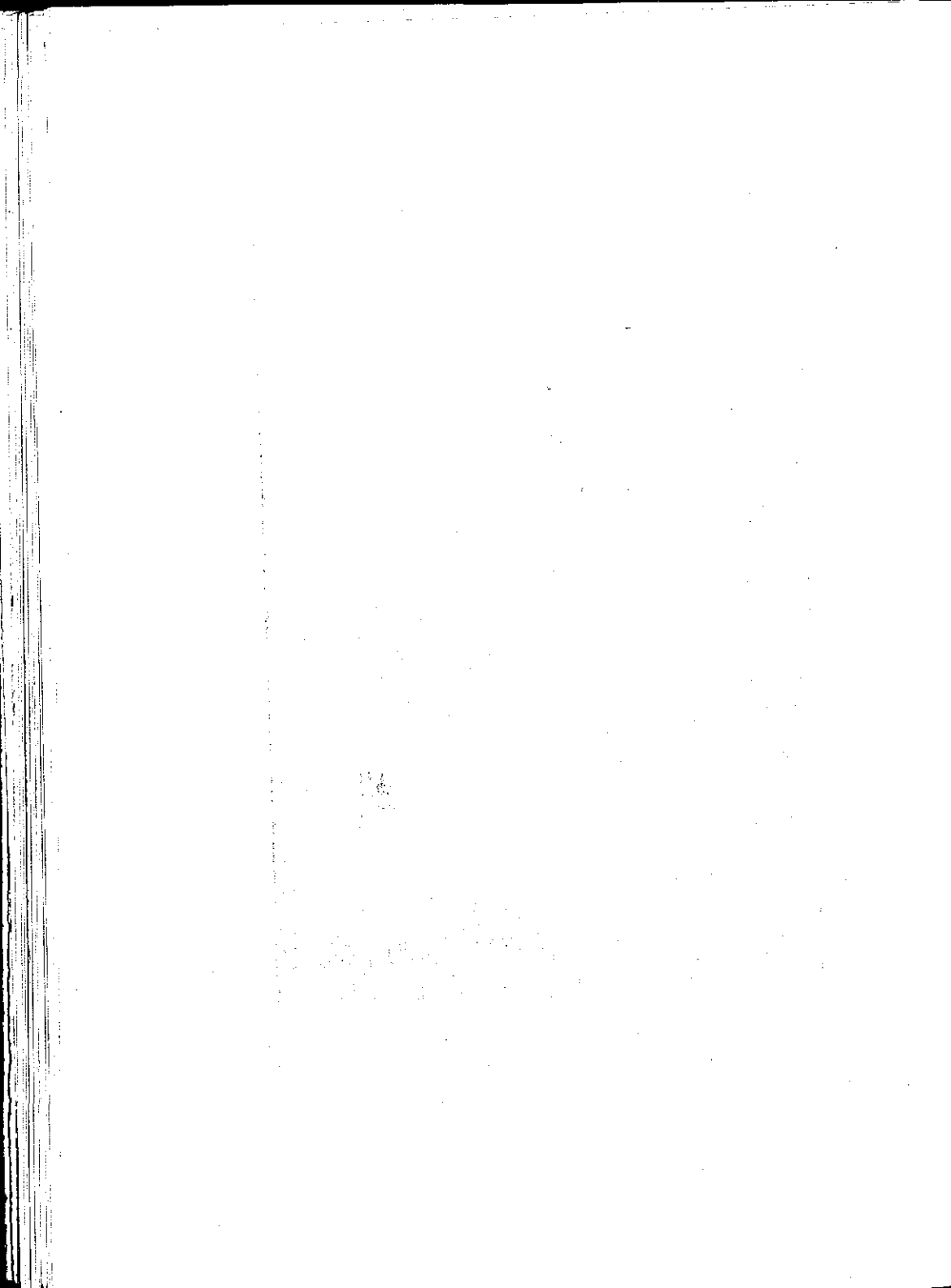
To one who pauses at this point and looks back over the intervening events to the beginning of things, it is evident that altogether there has been a substantial growth in the parish along every line, and each year has seen it taking a more prominent place in the community, and doing a greater work in the world.

During the next three months a number of candidates were heard, and on June 27, 1900, it was voted to call Rev. H. E. Benton, then at Derby Line, Vt., his work to begin Sept. 1.

It had been long felt that as a preparation for the semi-centennial in May, 1901, a renovation of the church interior was a necessity. Consequently under the leadership of the Ladies' Mission Circle, during the months of July and August a great transformation was effected; the pulpit platform was remodeled into a semi-circular shape; the electroliers were removed and the lamps distributed so as to give a light of uniform brightness throughout the church; new carpets were installed, the cushions were re-



REV. V. E. TOMLINSON.



covered, and the pulpit furniture upholstered afresh; the walls were frescoed and the wood work painted. On September 1 all was ready and the new pastorate opened in a church as neat and tasteful as one could wish.

Succeeding events may be briefly enumerated. December 7, 1900, appeared the first number of a parish paper called ST. PAULS MESSAGE, which is published bi-weekly and is devoted to parish interests.

During the winter a Men's Club was organized. It is, of course, too early as yet to tell what its service to the church may be.

For some years the feeling of the orthodox churches toward the Universalist has been growing more cordial, and this feeling bore fruit when on March 3, 1901, the Universalist minister was asked to stand in an orthodox pulpit. And it was in that very Baptist church—our close proximity to which was regretted by some, 30 years before—that the event took place! Truly, the world moves.

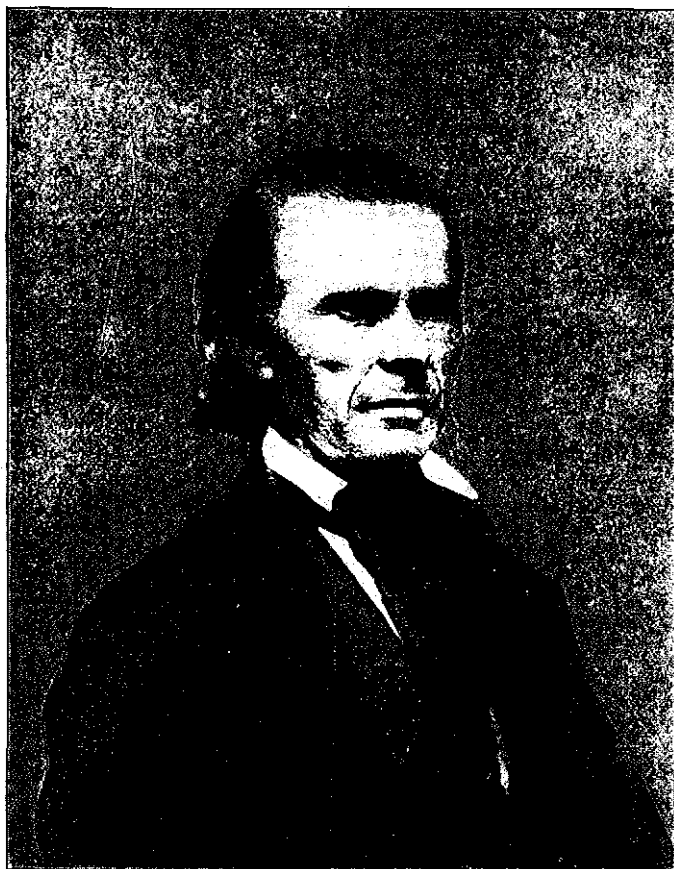
The coming Semi-Centennial Anniversary has filled a large place in the minds of all of late, and preparations are being made for a glorious jubilee. Meetings are to be held covering the first three days of May, and culminating in the anniversary sermon on the evening of May 3, which is the great day of all.

The annual parish meeting held April 4, showed all departments of the parish to be in a good con-

dition, and it seems that we may say with all truth in the words used by the CHRISTIAN AMBASSADOR in its account of the dedication of the church—nearly 33 years ago—"We are sure that the zeal and enterprise which have carried forward the work thus far, are equal to even greater achievements in the future."



PART II.
ORGANIZATIONS IN THE PARISH.



M. M. RANSOM.

CHAPTER I.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

COMPILED BY JOHN I. ZOLLER.

It was just previous to the organization of the parish, and while Temperance Hall was still the home of Universalism in Little Falls, that the Universalist Sunday School was organized in July, 1850, Merriman M. Ransom, father of the present librarian, George S. Ransom, being the first superintendent. The attendance the first Sunday was seven, the second Sunday, fourteen. That the school did not continue to grow at so rapid a rate, however, is shown by the fact that two years later a proposed entertainment had to be given up because it required seven boys, that being a greater number of boys than the school had at that time enrolled.

In October, 1854, the little band of Universalists, now organized and incorporated, purchased Temperance Hall, and the meeting place for both church and Sunday School was fitted up as a chapel and dedicated in June, 1856.

During these early times in our school's history it is difficult, as it always should be, to trace a distinct line of difference between the work of the church and that of the Sunday School. The workers were very much the same in both cases.

Truly, that is a good motto: "All the church in the Sunday School—all the Sunday School in the church."

Of those who were enrolled into membership at the first session at least two have remained faithful workers in the school to the present time—George S. Ransom and Mrs. J. H. Bucklin. About 1857 Mr. Ransom became connected with the official force of the school as assistant librarian, B. K. Houghton being librarian.

M. M. Ransom acted as superintendent for about two years, and was succeeded by L. O. Gay, father of the present assistant superintendent, Mrs. Bucklin. Mr. Gay served until about 1859.

Prior to 1866 practically no records appear to have been kept, and it is impossible in many cases to get exact dates. Mr. Gay was followed in office by Henry Link, who served for a time and was followed by Guilford N. Houghton. Mr. Houghton made a faithful superintendent for several years, not only looking after the eternal and spiritual welfare of his scholars, but also their temporal comforts and needs. He built the fires in winter, and swept and otherwise kept in order the chapel and its furnishings. He lived not far from the chapel. He was a member of the lumbering firm of William B. Houghton & Co., being a nephew of William B. Houghton and cousin of Byron K. Houghton.

At a meeting held April 16, 1866, the teachers and officers of the school completed their organ-

ization and adopted a constitution and by-laws, having the following preamble:

"We, the undersigned, appreciating the importance of organized work in behalf of our Sunday School, and meaning to qualify ourselves thoroughly for that work, and to make an earnest effort to advance the principles of true religion and sound morality in this village, especially amongst the young, do hereby form ourselves into an association for these purposes and agree to be governed by the following rules of order."

Then follows the constitution and the names of the charter members, all of which space forbids our giving here. Article 6, however, is different from any in most constitutions, and seems worthy of imitation and repeating as one which, should it be lived up to, would bring untold benefit. Here it is:

"Art. 6. This association is organized for WORK, and it shall be the duty of every member to attend its meetings regularly."

Of the organization records were kept. It held regular meetings on the first and third Tuesdays of each month from September 1st to April 1st, and during the remainder of the year on the first Tuesday of each month. Annual meetings came the first Tuesday in May of each year. The first officers of the teachers' association were: Rev. Augustus Tibbitts, President; Mrs. G. S. Ransom, Vice President; Mr. G. S. Ransom, Treasurer; G. N. Houghton, Secretary. At the regular meetings, in ad-

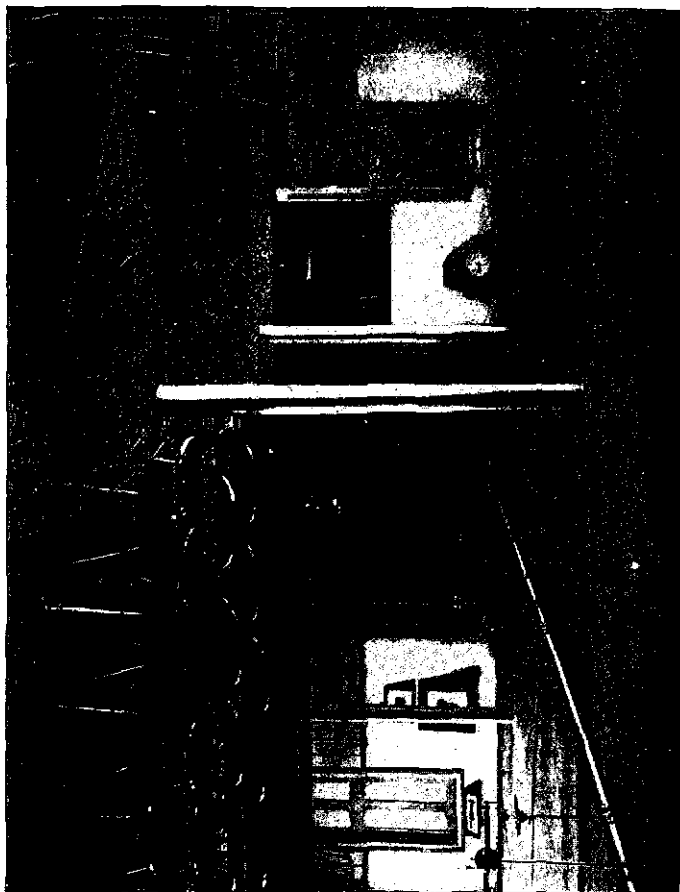
dition to ordinary business, topics relative to Sunday School work and methods were discussed. A committee of one was appointed at each meeting to prepare a topic for the next meeting.

In 1866, Temperance, then called Concert Hall, was sold, and in 1867 the erection of the brick church was begun. At the laying of the corner stone of the new church, July 30, 1867, "the Sunday School, headed by the band, marched from the chapel and took seats on the platform," where its members witnessed the ceremonies conducted by the venerable Rev. Dolphus Skinner.

In 1867 it was voted by the association to hold quarterly Sunday School concerts. Mention is made in December, 1867, of a Christmas tree. Also in that same year a certificate of membership in the school was adopted, and a pitcher and goblet presented to the superintendent by the school were appropriately marked by the association.

The new church was dedicated with fitting services June 9th, 1868. G. N. Houghton acted as superintendent until his death, September, 1868. His funeral was the first in the newly dedicated church. The Sunday School attended in a body and paid loving tribute to his memory. Rev. L. Holmes preached the sermon. Subsequently at a meeting of the association May 4, 1869, the following resolution offered by Miss Lucy Manchester was adopted by rising vote:

"Resolved, That this association desires to unite in an expression of their affectionate re-



SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOM.

membrance of our late deceased brother, G. N. Houghton and sympathy for his bereaved family." G. N. Houghton was the father of Harry W. Houghton.

December 8, 1868, Mrs. Bucklin, Mrs. Ransom, Miss Anderson, G. S. Ransom, N. B. Hyde and B. K. Houghton were appointed on motion of Rev. L. Holmes "a committee to get up and conduct a Sunday School exhibition, the proceeds of which shall be devoted to defraying the expenses of seating the vestry of the church." A communication had been received from some of the scholars estimating that \$100 could be cleared by such an exhibition. The actual proceeds were \$113.08.

N. B. Hyde was the fifth superintendent, taking charge soon after the death of G. N. Houghton. During the preceding summer, August 11, 1868, there was the first recorded mention of a Sunday School picnic. On motion of Mrs. Bucklin it was decided to hold a picnic in Bellinger's grove on Wednesday, August 19, meeting at the church at the ringing of the bell, 9 A. M.

The association held meetings with more or less regularity from its beginning, in 1866, till the fourth annual meeting, held May 4, 1870. For twelve years after that there is no record of any meetings. The Sunday School, however, continued alive and progressive. Since the erection of the church the school sessions have been held, with but few exceptions, in the vestry, from 12 M. to 1 o'clock, Sundays.

N. B. Hyde resigned September 18, 1876, and was succeeded by Henry Piper. Mrs. J. H. Bucklin became assistant superintendent about this time, which position she has held ever since. From 1877 to 1880 Smith Sanders acted as superintendent a portion of the time.

George F. Crumby, a young lawyer who had recently moved from Newport, became Superintendent about 1880. Mr. Crumby was a man of much ability and fine character, and was highly esteemed by all. He was elected president of the village in 1887, and held that position as well as the superintendency of the Sunday School at the time of his death, which occurred July 25, 1887. His funeral service was held in the church and was very impressive. The members of the Sunday School attended in a body, and literally strewed the casket with floral tributes. Rev. R. E. Sykes was the officiating clergyman, Rev. S. Gilbert offering prayer.

At this time the school had a membership of about 100, with an average attendance of less than 70. In 1882, while Mr. Crumby was superintendent and Rev. S. Gilbert pastor, the teachers' association was reorganized, with a constitution and by-laws somewhat modified, but based upon those of the old association. The new officers, elected March 16, 1882, were: George F. Crumby, President; Mrs. J. H. Bucklin, Vice President; Kittie M. Granger, Secretary; Byron K. Houghton, Treasurer. The committee on preparing constitution and by-laws consisted of

George F. Crumby, Mrs. J. H. Bucklin and Rev. S. Gilbert. Here again space forbids giving a complete list of the charter members. A regular meeting was, according to the constitution, to be held the first Monday evening of each month. Miss Kittie M. Granger (Mrs. Charles E. Bingham) served as secretary of the association until 1895, Miss Clara Taylor 1895-96, Miss Lillian Fort 1896-98, Frank Ottman 1898-99, Merritt Sharp 1899—.

A birthday box fund was instituted in the Sunday School early in the '80s and has been maintained uninterruptedly since. It has been customary to elect a birthday treasurer at each annual meeting, the last Thursday in April. Miss Kittie M. Granger, Frank Shall, T. J. Zoller and James Wiswell have successively held the office. T. J. Zoller is birthday treasurer at present.

The card and punch system of marking attendance was introduced into the school in 1899. A complete catalogue of the school and association in blue cover was published by the secretary, Merritt Sharp, 1899. It contains the Winchester confession of faith, preamble, constitution and by-laws of the association, a list of its members and a complete list of the officers, teachers and classes of the school. Copies of the catalogue are kept for distribution to those desirous of them.

For three years after the death of Mr. Crumby no superintendent was elected. In 1890 J. I.

Zoller was elected superintendent, serving one year. E. V. Decker served from 1891 to 1892, and J. I. Zoller again during the summer of '92.

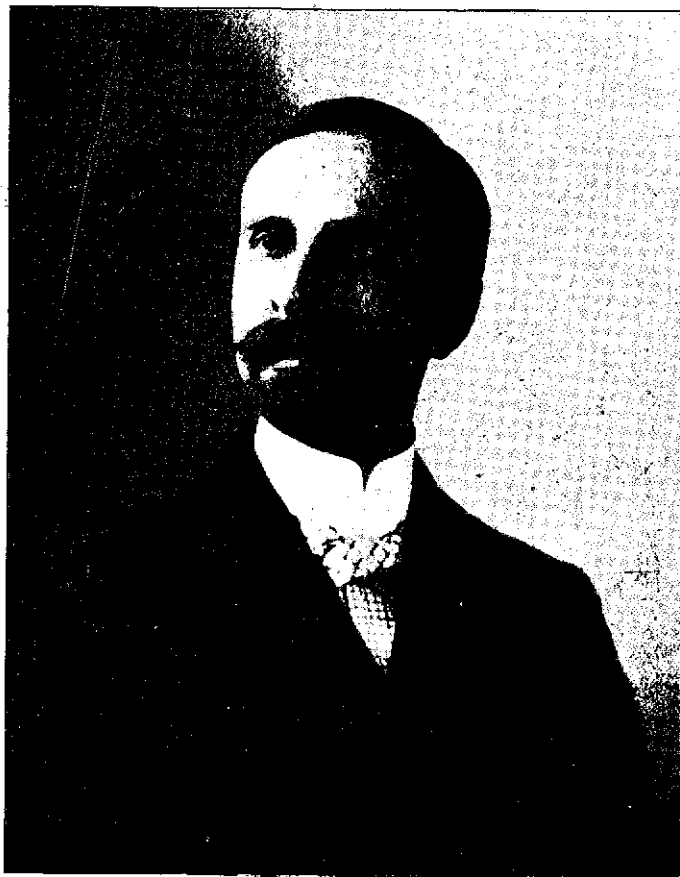
September 1st, 1892, by vote of the association, regular weekly teachers' meetings for study of the lessons and exchange of ideas were re-instituted. These meetings have since been kept up with a good degree of regularity, especially during the last six years. The pastor has generally conducted these meetings, and during his absence some one of the teachers or officers has been substitute leader.

June 5th, 1893, William Lasher was elected superintendent and served until September 12, 1894, when he resigned to attend St. Lawrence University. June 5, 1895, John I. Zoller was appointed superintendent pro tem, to act until a superintendent could be "selected and secured."

George S. Ransom has been librarian for many years. George Stevenson has been association librarian* and assistant librarian since 1888. In 1899 and 1900 the library was re-catalogued and many new books added. Charles Glover, assistant librarian, removed to Buffalo in the fall of 1900, and was succeeded by John Z. Leon.

During the winter of 1898-99 Charles E. Bingham acted as superintendent during the illness of J. I. Zoller.

*During the pastorate of Rev. Selden Gilbert, in order to provide books for the older members of the school, the Association raised a sum of money by subscription, and the books thus purchased formed the nucleus of the Association library. By a system of yearly dues money was provided to sustain and increase this library. After a number of years the system was given up, and a few years ago the library was presented to the Sunday School.



J. I. ZOLLER.

April 6, 1869, it was voted to spend \$50 for new books for the library, same to be selected by Rev. L. Holmes.

In January, 1888, J. C. Arnold was elected treasurer to succeed Howard Bartle. Miss Edith Pullman served as treasurer 1896-99, and Tom J. Zoller 1899—. November 2, 1895, some amendments and additions were made to the by-laws, and a distinction was made between active and honorary members of the association.

The primary class is large and flourishing under the tutelage of Mrs. Beulah Eaton and Miss Jennie Bailey.

The present pastor, Rev. H. E. Benton, with the assistance of C. E. Bingham, organized a young men's class in the fall of 1900.

Mrs. Charles West organized a ladies' Bible class in 1892.

The school has for many years held concerts in the church auditorium on Children's Day morning and Christmas Sunday evening. Every year rally-day in September or October and the annual Christmas tree exercises, when the members of the primary department are remembered with candy and gifts from the Sunday School, are occasions of interest greater than usual. The annual sleigh-ride of the primary department also is a special feature.

Primary graduation exercises are frequently held on Easter Sunday. In 1896 Mrs. Shall's class purchased new song books for the school

entitled, "Songs of the Golden." In 1896-97 Miss Ida Evelyn Canfield officiated as chorister.

Many special services, items of work and facts other than those mentioned have occurred in the school during its history. To enumerate and describe them together with the participants and the faithful teachers and scholars, would be beyond the task of the present historian.

St. Pauls Sunday School has done well so far. May its growth be correspondingly as great during the next semi-centenary.



CHAPTER II.

THE WOMEN AND THE CHURCH.

COMPILED BY MRS. J. H. BUCKLIN.

It is conceded that to the agency of woman the establishment and extension of the Christian religion are due; that at the present time women are more active in devising measures and means for the advancement of morality and truth than men. So our women occupy an important place in the preservation and promotion of the gospel we profess, and their work antedates the organization of the "Universalist Society in Little Falls."

While the first record book, with a constitution and by-laws drawn up by Rev. J. H. Harter, cannot be found, the list of memberships recorded in 1863 contains the names of six persons (three of whom are still living) accredited as members in 1850, with several others of the date 1857. The first work in which they engaged was piecing and quilting bedding.

In 1863, their numbers having gradually increased, they became organized as "The Ladies Social Circle," meeting from week to week and house to house, doing whatever their hands could find to do. Much was accomplished materially in the gatherings through the year, and the idea

of closer communion continually grew until the subject agitated resulted in a desire for a "church organization." In the words of the record, "as a church 'service' was necessary for a church organization a committee was appointed to ascertain the cost of one suitable for that purpose." A communion set was purchased and used for the first time in October, 1863.

The records show that in 1866 the ladies met on several occasions, at one place in the afternoon and a different one in the evening. It would seem from that time the cause was more prosperous and their efforts successful. The report of a fair held that year shows an addition to the treasury of \$914.04, and as with the church organization, a great desire for a "church building" had grown and developed into arrangements for a site and building, the Ladies Social Circle decided to head the subscription list with \$1,000. It will be of interest to know that at the annual meeting in 1867 the treasurer's report for the year was \$1,666.05.

In 1882 the name of "Ladies Aid Association of St. Pauls Universalist Church" was taken, and another constitution and by-laws adopted, with thirty-one members, male and female, the the last names appearing on the roll being George F. Crumby and Lillie A. Crumby.

For thirteen years our women were banded together as an "aid" (and it was often remarked there was never a more peaceful and harmonious society) when in 1894, Mrs. C. A. Quimby, Pres-

ident of the National Missionary Society, visited the "aid" at one of their business meetings and endeavored to enlist their sympathy and interest in the formation of a "Mission Circle." While some were favorably disposed to missionary work, it was not thought advisable, and was considered impossible to support two different societies in the parish, as the full requirements of a Mission Circle would debar many interested, active, faithful women.

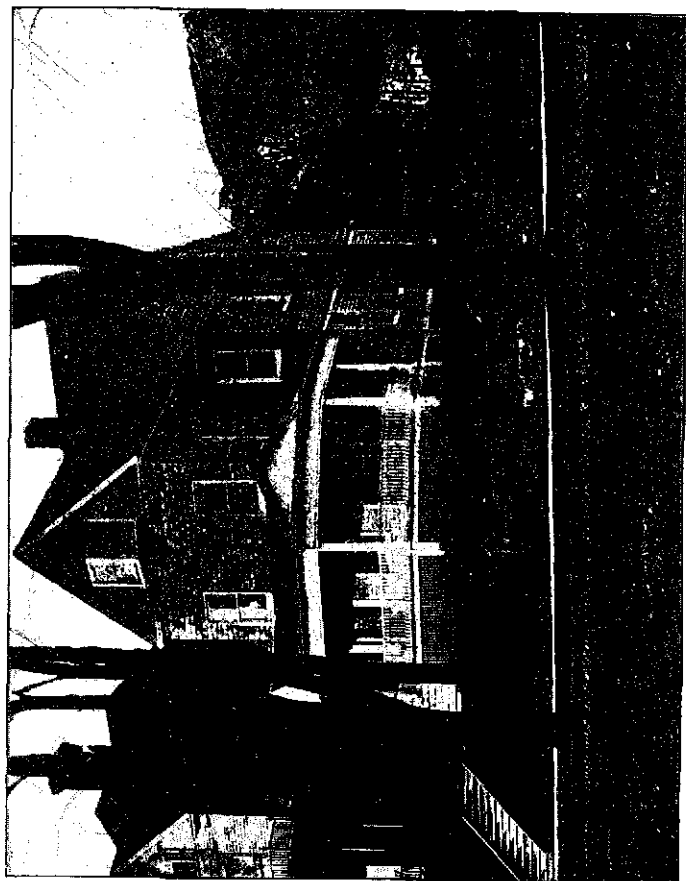
The following year, 1895, the state president, Mrs. Libby, presented the work in such a forcible, *convincing manner*, and in the meantime the missionary subject and spirit had made so deep an impression, that many were converted, and the result was the formation of a Mission Circle.

There had been since the organization of the Women's Centenary Association, a number in the parish who had contributed their annual memberships, and as the "circles" were an outgrowth and auxiliaries to this society, their names have continued on the roll. A satisfactory arrangement was effected whereby all could contribute of their time, strength and money in their own special way, and these six years the women have united under this banner and become a potent factor in building up the cause in this place.

During the past six years, through their efforts, over \$4,000 have been put into the treasury. Not only has the indebtedness to the choir and incidental expenses been cancelled the present

year, but over an additional \$1,200 have been expended in re-decorating and painting the church auditorium, furnishing new carpet, new cushions and electric lights. The hope is cherished that through the next fifty years the light that has been kept burning so brightly may not be diminished, but continue to increase in brilliancy until it shall be seen of all, and the Universalist church shall attain an even higher, more honored and more influential position in the city. And in the future, as in the past, the women will do their part.





PARSONAGE.

CHAPTER III.

THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHRISTIAN UNION.

COMPILED BY ZAIDA ZOLLER.

The Young People's Christian Union of St. Pauls Universalist church was organized Nov. 3, 1890, by the Rev. Richard E. Sykes, assisted by the Rev. Clarence Rice. There were about forty young people present at this first gathering, all of whom enlisted as members of the society. Soon after organizing a constitution and colors were adopted, a religious, flower, look-out and social committee, also a committee to visit the sick, were appointed, and officers—a president, secretary and treasurer—were elected for six months, Walter W. Cooper being chosen the first president of the society.

The devotional meetings were held once a week, to which all were invited, and each member, according to the constitution, was requested to take part other than singing. This was found to be quite difficult at first, and so instead of giving utterance to original thoughts upon the subject under discussion, each member began with reading a verse from the Bible or giving some quotation, but now only a small number are satisfied with giving another's thoughts.

The young people met on Monday evening and for the first few months held their meetings in the library room, until one night the meeting was interrupted by the burning of cayenne pepper, which someone had thrown into the furnace as a joke. Naturally this disturbance necessitated a speedy change of rooms, and from that time on the meetings have been and are still held in the vestry.

On February 16, 1891, a special business meeting was called for the purpose of devising some plan by which to raise \$25 for the support of a state missionary. It was decided by vote of the society to give a "literary tea" on Friday evening, the 20th of March. This marks the date of not only the first social, but financially the most successful one that the Union has ever held. It netted the sum of \$41.30.

About this time a report was given showing that the Y. P. C. U. of Little Falls could become a member of the state Y. P. C. U. by applying to the secretary of that Union, and without change of constitution. It was, therefore, decided by the society that application for membership be made. This was done, and thus our local Union became united with the state Union. Soon after the Union was asked to contribute money to the National Union for the purpose of erecting a church at Harriman, Tennessee. It cheerfully responded to the call. Also at a later time when the Universalist church at Dolgeville was being built the Union again gave its financial help.

It was not until March, 1892, that the Y. P. C. U. found time to aid financially the church to which it belongs. At that time new chairs were added to the Sunday School, largely through the efforts of the young people. A few years later the Union assisted Rev. R. E. Sykes in raising money to purchase a piano in place of the organ which had served its time.

During the summer months of '91 the Union changed the night of the devotional meetings from Monday to Sunday evening, the meeting being held an hour before the Sunday evening service, but this did not prove successful at the time, so the meeting was again changed to Monday evening. However, at the present time, after a successful trial of three months, the meetings are held every Sunday at 6 o'clock.

In the year of '92 the Union held its first and only picnic. There was considerable discussion as to where it should be held, but finally the members agreed upon one place, namely—Whitman Hill.

Since January 29, 1893, Young People's Day has been observed. This is a special Sunday in each year set apart for the young people, who conduct the evening service and decorate the church with the Union colors—blue and white. On these occasions many interesting and helpful papers have been read.

On the Monday evening following Young People's Day the Y. P. C. U. holds a banquet, to

which friends from the neighboring Unions are invited. The first banquet was held January 31, 1898. The originator of these enjoyable events was the Rev. V. E. Tomlinson.

In the history of the Union, delegates have been sent to all state and district conventions, and to several national conventions. At the district convention held at Columbus, a banner was presented by our Union to the Union having the largest number of delegates present, and it was carried off by the Bridgewater Union.

In reading over the records of our society we find that this organization has held many socials and also given some very profitable entertainments. On two different dates in 1899 plays were given in the opera house under the auspices of the Y. P. C. U. of Dolgeville, the Little Falls Union sharing one-half of the net proceeds. We received the aggregate amount of \$86.80.

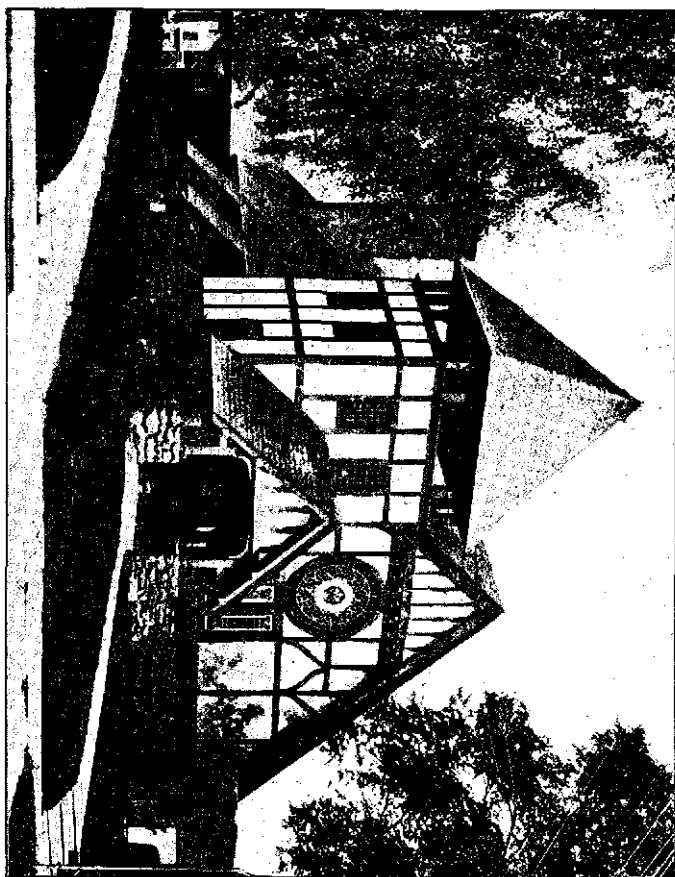
This led our local Union to deposit \$100 in the Albany Savings Bank, known as "The Church Repair Fund." Last summer the amount was used for such a purpose.

Coming to the present time in the history of our Union, we have 47 members enrolled but not all are active members. Our treasury is kept in good condition, being constantly replenished by collections, socials and entertainments.

It is, indeed, the hope of each member that our local Union may play its part in the religious world, and be a helpful and important branch of

our church. It is also our desire that this organization may be of help in our city; that its door may be open to all those who desire to attain the object of this society, which is to promote an earnest Christian life among its members, to increase their mutual acquaintance, and to make them more useful in the service of God.





DOLGEVILLE CHURCH.

PART III.
HISTORY OF THE DOLGEVILLE PARISH.

CHAPTER I.

CONTRIBUTED BY REV. R. E. SYKES, FOUNDER
OF THE PARISH.

One afternoon in the summer of 1892 Mrs. J. B. Fenner and Mrs. Sidney Ransom, of Dolgeville, called at my home in Little Falls and invited me to visit Dolgeville on the following Sunday and preach. The Methodist congregation courteously granted the use of their church for the service, and for the three following Sundays. During these four weeks it became apparent that I could not stand the strain of preaching three times on Sunday, the difficulty being increased by the carriage ride over the exceedingly rough roads. I therefore announced that my engagement must terminate after the fourth Sunday.

The fourth Sunday afternoon meeting was so well attended, and so much interest manifested, that the people expressed a desire that in some way the services should be continued. The eagerness to learn more of our interpretation of the Gospel was very encouraging, and made me greatly desire to comply with the request of the people.

On Tuesday evening following the last Sunday service an appointment was made at the home of

Mrs. Marjorie Barney to get an expression from the people regarding the advisability of continuing the meetings. The house in which this meeting was held has since burned. As I remember, there were about twenty-five people present. I preached a sermon, offered prayer and we all joined in singing hymns. At the conclusion of the devotional exercises I made the proposition to hold preaching services on each Tuesday evening during the autumn and winter, provided a suitable hall could be secured. Arrangements were made and on the following week the services were begun in what was then Odd Fellows Hall.

The interest in the meetings and the numbers in attendance far exceeded my expectations. At the request of the people, one week during the winter was devoted to a series of meetings at which I gave a course of lectures expository of the doctrines of Universalism. The hall was not adequate to accommodate all who came. On one evening the hall was so overtaxed that the floor began to settle, and quite a number being frightened left the building. On the following day the floor was strengthened by props placed underneath. Many who came to these meetings were surprised to learn that the conceptions of Universalism which they had previously held and which had prejudiced them against our faith, were erroneous and misleading.

A little later a parish and church organization was effected, and at the first opportunity over

thirty people united with the church by profession of faith. Suggestions in favor of a new church building were soon expressed and met the approval of the congregation. In the autumn of 1893 I went to Dolgeville for the express purpose of making a canvas for funds. It was a strange coincidence that on that very day some of the departments of the great industry of Dolgeville closed down indefinitely, throwing many men out of employment. This had a very depressing effect on the entire community. Of course, under the circumstances, any attempt to raise funds would have been futile, and I returned without making any effort.

The financial condition of the town, as of nearly all manufacturing communities in our land, was much disturbed during the winter of 1893, making it impossible to raise money except for the necessities of life. However, our religious services continued uninterrupted during the winter and the interest in them did not abate.

In the spring of 1894 it was thought wise to make an effort to secure funds. The Missionary Board of the New York State Convention of Universalists encouraged us by a gift of \$500. The ladies of the Dolgeville parish pledged \$500. As I remember the people directly connected with the Little Falls parish added about \$500. All the people of Dolgeville who were interested in the movement responded with promptness and generosity. The Salisbury people of our faith soon discerned that a Universalist church in

Dolgeville would revive the life of their old church and aided the movement by generous contributions. The Universalists of Devereaux also brought their gifts. Owing to the financial depression quite a few in Dolgeville were unable to give money, yet they showed their interest in other ways equally helpful, many of them making donations in days' work.

Much interest was shown by the congregation in the selection of a church site. All felt the vital importance of choosing a locality that would be satisfactory to the congregation. Many sites were suggested and several were tendered as gifts to the society. Opinions differed very radically and were expressed with earnestness. The site finally chosen was enthusiastically accepted by all, and I believe is regarded by the citizens of Dolgeville as the best site in the village for a church.

Architect Gouge, of Utica, was engaged and the plan of the present church was approved. The contract for its construction was immediately awarded and the work began. The stones used in the building were taken from East Canada Creek and several members of the congregation assisted in loading them on the wagons.

The church was dedicated in May, 1895, Rev. I. M. Atwood, D. D., preaching the sermon. I have often been asked if the work in Dolgeville interfered with the work in Little Falls. My answer is "No." During those three years the home parish was never in a stronger condition.

A church is made strong more by what it gives than by what it receives. At times the work was very hard and exacting, but I always enjoyed it. One of the pleasantest and most satisfactory retrospects of my life is the work in Dolgeville. The picture of the little church hangs in my study and ever keeps fresh the memories that grow more precious as the years pass. It now seems to me that the experience of those three years was a preparation for the difficult task in which I am now engaged in the great empire of the west. Each of that faithful little band who worked with me deserves personal mention, but space does not permit. As the shadows of life lengthen and the results of our labors widen, we shall look back with increasing joy to the days of small things.



CHAPTER II.

EVENTS SUCCEEDING THE CLOSE OF REV. R. E. SYKES' PASTORATE.

COMPILED BY MRS. W. H. FAVILLE.

In the month of June, 1895, the church at Dolgeville welcomed as its second pastor Rev. V. E. Tomlinson, of Little Falls, for it was still dependent upon the parent parish, and not yet to be trusted to stand alone. Services were held at 3 o'clock Sunday afternoons, necessitating, for the clergyman, a drive through varied phases of weather and over roads that were sometimes well nigh impassable. But he never failed to reach us.

It will never be forgotten in Dolgeville, how one afternoon in spring, despairing of the roads, which were axle deep with mud and slush, he walked the railroad track rather than disappoint the waiting congregation; nor that other, when the special engine which was bringing him broke down, and after an hour's delay he finally landed at the park, rushed down from there on foot, arriving breathless and muddy—but in time to hold the service.

Throughout the five years of his pastorate he gave us most faithfully and liberally of his time and energies, not only on Sundays, but throughout the week as well.

Mr. Sykes left us with 31 members enrolled. Mr. Tomlinson added 40 more to the list, but besides the 71 registered names there are many faithful and zealous workers who, we feel, belong to us.

In 1898 a Young People's Union was formed, which is now an active branch of the church life.

In 1895 the debt of the church was \$2,500, of which sum \$1,000 was in a mortgage and the balance in notes. At Mr. Tomlinson's farewell reception in May, 1900, he publicly burned, amid rejoicing, the bank note which the trustees and Ladies' Aid had carried through so many years. That left the debt reduced to \$1,125, and at present writing it is diminished to \$900. Over \$200 was also raised during this time for painting, decorating and carpeting, besides a yearly sum of \$750 for current expenses.

The church has been most kindly remembered also by one of its Little Falls friends. Mrs. E. Granger presented it with a fine communion set, which is highly prized by the society, and the local Y. P. C. U. provided a handsome table.

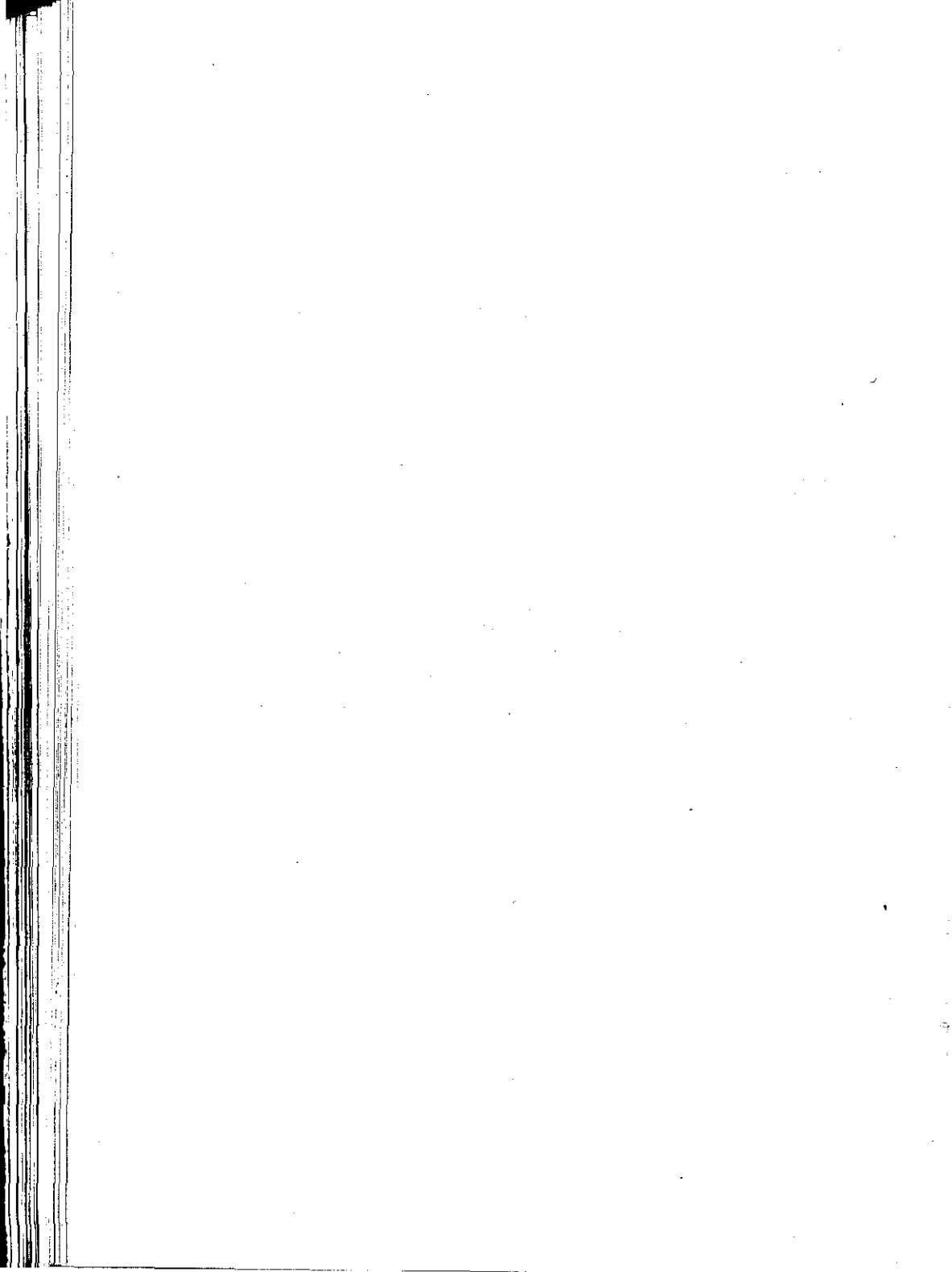
In June, 1900, amid deep universal regret, not only in the parish but in the entire community as well, Mr. Tomlinson left us to enter a larger field, and after a very short period of pulpit supply, the Rev. Louis Robinson was called to take charge of the Dolgeville and Salisbury parishes, entering upon his duties July 1st, 1900. The hour was changed to 10:30 A. M., and the Junior Union organized by Mr. Robinson holds its

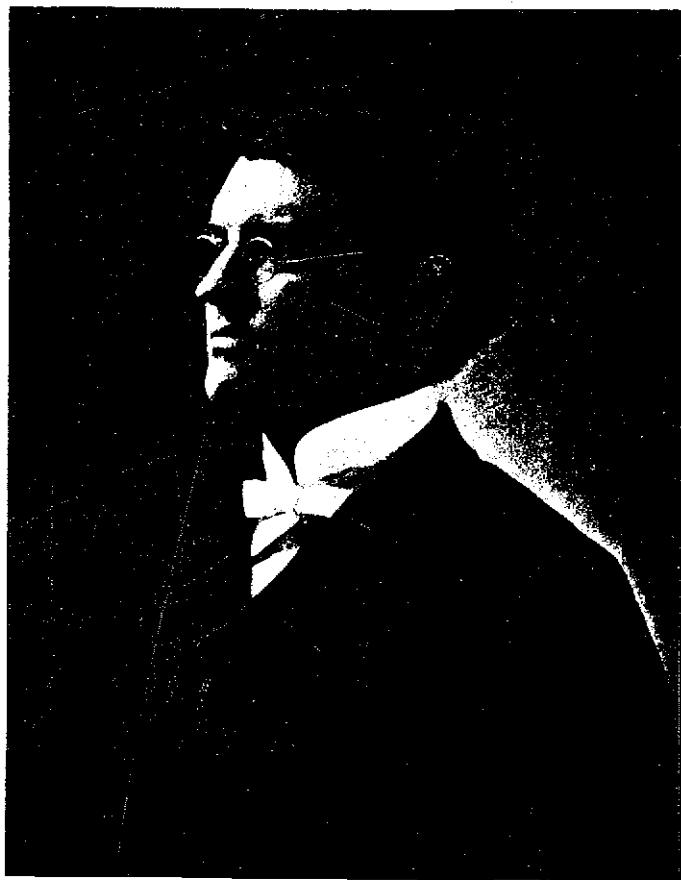
meeting at 6 P. M., followed by the Senior Union at 7:30, the pastor going to Salisbury in the afternoon.

With a resident pastor the work has gone on with undiminished interest and success. We feel that our church has gained the respect of the town, and has fully justified its existence as the only exponent of the liberal faith in the community, and with increasing membership and lessening debt, we look forward to years of still greater usefulness and service.

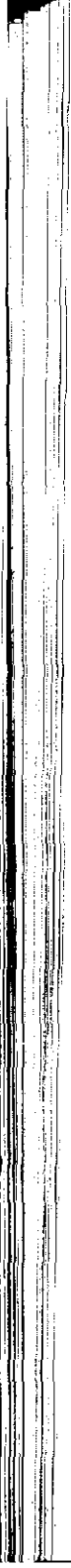
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APPENDICES.





REV. H. E. BENTON.



A.

RECORD OF PASTORATES.

J. H. Harter, 1849—May, 1851.
T. J. Whitcomb, Sept., 1851—Sept., 1853.
J. H. Hobbs, Sept., 1853—July, 1854.
G. W. Skinner, Nov. 1854—May, 1857.
B. B. Halleck, June, 1857—1858-9.
J. R. Sage, May, 1859—May, 1862.
Francis Peck, May, 1862—May, 1863.
Orello Cone, June, 1863—August, 1865.
A. Tibbitts, May, 1866—May, 1867.
L. Holmes, Oct. 1867—May, 1871.
George P. Hibbard, June, 1871—Oct., 1872.
H. D. L. Webster, May, 1873—August, 1874.
H. A. Hanaford, April, 1875—Oct., 1877.
E. F. Pember, Dec., 1877—Nov., 1881.
Selden Gilbert, Nov., 1881—Sept., 1884.
R. E. Sykes, June, 1885—May, 1895.
V. E. Tomlinson, June, 1895—May, 1900.
H. E. Benton, Sept., 1900—.

B.

LIST OF TRUSTEES.

L. O. Gay, 1851-54; 1865-68.
J. K. Chapman, 1851-60.
O. Angel, 1851-54.
W. B. Houghton, 1851-89.
L. W. Gray, 1851-59.
A. Fuller, 1851-55.
M. M. Ransom, 1851-55.

A. Zoller, 1851-55.
C. Benedict, 1851-99.
J. H. Bucklin, 1855-57; 58-87.
Enoch Nelson, 1855-57.
Charles Lewis, 1855-58.
P. G. Potter, 1855-62.
J. H. Wilcox, 1855-56; 62-65.
Asa Wilcox, 1856-62.
Henry Link, 1857-60; 80-85.
Elijah Jones, 1857-66.
John Hughes, 1859-62.
N. Fosdick, 1860-66.
George Hoard, 1860-81.
M. M. Abel, 1862-76.
Andrew Zimmerman, 1862-65.
A. B. Westcott, 1865-71.
B. H. Dockstader, 1866-71.
J. M. Cronkhite, 1866-69; 74-80.
George Keller, 1868-71.
S. H. Decamp, 1869-74.
James Hart, 1869-84.
Sylvester Levee, 1871-77.
John Devendorf, 1872-81.
Addison Eaton, 1876-98.
B. K. Houghton, 1871-72.
Augustus Rofenot, 1877-83.
William Howell, 1881-83.
H. Dunteman, 1881-84, 1901—.
J. P. Harvey, 1883-97.
D. Mesick, 1883-84.
G. S. Ransom, 1885-97.
Jacob Zoller, 1887-88.

N. E. Ransom, 1888-96.
Oscar Taylor, 1889-98.
S. J. Waters, 1896-99, 1900—.
G. W. Shall, 1897-1900.
J. I. Zoller, 1897-1900.
Dr. G. S. Eveleth, 1898-1901.
W. H. Shaut, 1898-1901.
E. J. Diefendorf, 1899—.
E. V. Decker, 1899—.
John Leon, 1900—.
C. E. Bingham, 1901—.

C.

OFFICERS OF PARISH AND ITS ORGANIZATIONS, 1901.

Pastor, Rev. H. E. Benton.

CHURCH.

Deacons—George S. Ransom, J. P. Harvey.

PARISH.

Trustees—S. J. Waters, Chairman; John Leon, Clerk. E. V. Decker, E. J. Diefendorf, Henry Dunteman, C. E. Bingham.

Treasurer, George A. Snell.

Collector, William Doxtater.

SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Superintendent, John I. Zoller.

Assistant Superintendent, Mrs. J. H. Bucklin.

Secretary, Merritt Sharp.

Treasurer, T. J. Zoller.

Librarian, George S. Ransom.
Assistant Librarians, George Stevenson, John
Z. Leon.

LADIES' MISSION CIRCLE.

President, Mrs. Howard Hendrix.
Vice President, Mrs. C. D. West.
Secretary, Mrs. F. H. Gowen.
Treasurer, Miss Alice J. Bailey.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHRISTIAN UNION.

President, George W. Boyle.
Vice President, Miss Josephine Cooper.
Secretary, Miss Zaida Zoller.
Treasurer, Miss Lillian Fort.

MEN'S CLUB.

President, Merrit Sharp.
First Vice President, George S. Ransom.
Second Vice President, H. A. DeCoster.
Secretary, James Wiswell.
Treasurer, John I. Zoller.

CHOIR.

Soprano, Miss Eleanor Owens. Alto, Miss
Grace Dunteman. Tenor, Grant Weller. Bass,
Eugene Powell. Organist, Miss Fannie Dale.

USHERS.

I. E. House, Myers Bucklin, George Steven-
son, John Z. Leon.

D

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

Mrs. G. W. Shall, Miss Ada G. Bellinger, Miss
Lillian Fort, Mrs. S. K. Houghton, Miss Ida E.

Wilkie, Miss Alice J. Bailey, Mrs. C. D. West,
Miss Bessie Baughman, Mrs. M. Van Allen,
Mrs. L. Pullman, Mrs. E. E. Bucklin, Miss Edith
I. Pullman, Miss Maude J. Zoller, Miss Mary
L. Uhle, Miss Anna Wepper, Miss Jennie Bailey,
Mrs. Beulah Eaton, Mr. Thomas J. Zoller, Mr.
Eugene Tift.

