

LANCASTER BIBLE SOCIETY, 1815-1915

From the fact that the Lancaster Bible Society was organized as an auxiliary to the Pennsylvania Bible Society, but is now, as is also the Pennsylvania Society, auxiliary to the Atlantic Agency of the American Bible Society, it is but proper that we say a few words regarding these organizations.

We preface our remarks, however, with just a few lines in relation to the origin of Bibles societies. We learn that in 1802 Rev. Thomas Charles, a Welshman, went to England in the interest of the Bible. He secured a moderate supply and went back with them to Wales, and within ten years' time he had distributed ten thousand books. This suggested the idea, and soon after (in 1804) the British and Foreign Association was formed in London.

The Pennsylvania Bible Society followed by organizing in Philadelphia in 1805. It has accomplished a wonderful amount of work in its line. During the years 1882-83, the society distributed 50,609 Bibles, 112,826 Testaments, 3,312 Testaments and Psalms, 28,158 portions of the Bible, or a total of 194,905 volumes, in 17 different languages and in raised letters for the blind.

The great American Bible Society was established in New York City in 1816. Thirty-five local societies united in its formation. The organization is strictly nonsectarian. Seven different

denominations of Christians are represented in its Board of Managers. Its object, as stated when organized, was the translation, publication and circulation of the Holy Scriptures, of the version now in common use, without note or comment. Since then, however, the society began to publish and circulate also the revised and the American revised versions of the Scriptures.

The American Society has attempted to supply the people of the United States with Bibles on several occasions. First, in 1829, when our population was not quite 13,000,000; in 1856, when it had more than doubled. In the sixteen years intervening between 1866 and 1882, the agents of the society visited 8,813,298 families, and the number found destitute of the Holy Scriptures was 1,082,558, and of these 753,760 were supplied. In addition, 488,273 were given to individuals. Another family visitation, ending with March 31, 1890, resulted as follows: Number of families visited, 6,309,628; found without the Scriptures, 757,581; number supplied, 473,806. In addition, 209,053 individuals were supplied.

The society has done an almost incredible amount of work, having, since its organization, to the close of the fiscal year, March 31, 1912, issued 94,220,105 volumes.

The entire Bible has been translated into 107 languages. Including these and parts thereof, the number of versions in circulation at present are 479. In this line the society has borne its full share of the good work.

Coming now to our own home organization, we learn that early in the year 1815 a movement was put on foot looking to the establishment of a Lancaster Bible Society, by the issuing of a call in the "Weekly Intelligencer," then published by William

Dickson, for a public meeting of the citizens (including the clergy) of the borough and county of Lancaster, to meet in the Court House, then located on the site now occupied by the soldiers' monument in Penn Square, at 10 o'clock a. m., Wednesday, February 8, 1815, to take into consideration the formation of a society to be called "The Lancaster County Auxiliary Bible Society," the object of which shall be "to acquire ability to supply the poor of all denominations of Christians in the county with a copy of the Holy Scriptures, without note or comment, in the English or German language, as occasion may require."

At this time Lancaster was a borough with Adam Reigart, Esq., as Chief Burgess, the city not being incorporated until 1818.

There was evidently some opposition to the object proposed by this call if we may judge from some of the newspaper comments of that day. It was, however, ably defended by Editor Dickson, of the "Intelligencer," who among other things wrote: "Let it not be said that such an institution is unnecessary, that the poor of this county are well supplied with Bibles. A full and fair investigation of the subject, such as is now contemplated, will prove the contrary."

In answer to this call, we are told, there was quite a notable gathering of clergymen and citizens of the borough and county assembled in the Court House, on Wednesday, February 8, 1815, at 10 o'clock in the morning.

John Huble, Esq., a member of the Lancaster Bar, was called to preside, and forcibly stated the object of the meeting. Rev. Joseph Clarkson, rector of St. James' Episcopal Church, was chosen secretary. A motion to organize "The Lancaster County

Auxiliary Bible Society" was unanimously adopted. A number of committees were appointed, one of which was instructed to report a constitution. Later this committee reported and the same was adopted and ordered printed. The meeting then adjourned, to reassemble on Tuesday, May 2, 1815, the Committee on Meetings having been instructed to make such arrangements as they deemed best.

Accordingly they arranged for a religious service in the German (now Trinity) Lutheran Church, on Tuesday, May 2, 1815, as the meeting had directed, at 10 o'clock a. m.

This service was largely attended, the pastor of the church, the Rev. Henry Ernst Muhlenberg, D.D., presiding, and preaching a sermon in the German language, and the Rev. William Kerr, D.D., pastor of the Donegal Presbyterian Church, in English, the former representing the borough, and the latter the county. At the close of this service an adjournment was had to meet in the Court House at 2 o'clock that afternoon for a business session.

On assembling in the afternoon John Hubley, Esq., who had served as chairman of the first meeting on February 8, being necessarily absent, Adam Reigart, Esq., Chief Burgess of the Borough of Lancaster, was called to preside. Rev. Joseph Clarkson, rector of St. James' Episcopal Church, who was the secretary of the first meeting, was again called upon to fill that position.

The meeting now went into an election for permanent officers of the society, with the following result: President, Rev. Dr. Henry Ernst Muhlenberg, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church; Vice Presidents, Rev. Dr. William Kerr, pastor of Donegal Presbyterian Church, and Rev. Joseph Clark-

son, rector of St. James' Episcopal Church; Recording Secretary, Samuel White, a drygoods merchant, with a store on East King street; Corresponding Secretary, Charles Smith, Esq. Harris' History says he was a noted member of the Lancaster Bar, and was elected to the Legislature and State Senate. He served as Judge of the Ninth judicial district, which he resigned in 1820 to accept the Judgeship of the District Court of the city and county of Lancaster. He married a daughter of Judge Jasper Yeates, of the Supreme Court. He was the builder and owner of the once handsome residence near Lancaster known as "Hardwicke." For Treasurer, William Kirkpatrick, Esq., a prominent citizen, town clerk, and later on a member and president of Select Council.

The following Board of Managers was also chosen: Rev. Nathaniel Sample, pastor of the Presbyterian Church; Rev. Constantine Miller, pastor of the Moravian Church; Rev. Stephen Boyer, pastor of the First Methodist Church, and Messrs. Samuel Bethel, Esq.; John McKissick, Alexander Boggs, John Haldeman, Henry Slaymaker, William Wright, Robert Coleman, William Kirkpatrick, Charles Smith, Esq., Adam Reigart, Esq.; James Hopkins, Esq., William Dickson, James Houston, Dr. Samuel Humes, Edward Brian, Matthias Stark, David Witmer, John Hubley, Esq.; Samuel White, John White-side, Esq.

Thus this association, which has come down to us in an unbroken chain through these one hundred years, was launched upon a field of work that should prove a blessing and a help to untold numbers in the years to come.

If we ponder over these names, al-

most every one of which has been honorably identified with the early history and making of our city and county, need it surprise us that an organization, the offspring of sires such as these names represent, still lives?

The records tell us that the new organization went diligently to work in this new field of labor. Also, that one of its earliest misfortunes was the loss of its president, the Rev. Dr. Muhlenberg. Just three weeks from the time he was chosen as the presiding officer he died, expiring suddenly on May 23, 1815. Rev. Dr. Endress who succeeded Dr. Muhlenberg as pastor of Trinity Church, was elected to the presidency of the society.

1816.—Tuesday, May 7. The first anniversary of the society was held in the Court House, at 10 a. m. Addresses were made by the President, Rev. Dr. Endress, and Rev. Nathaniel W. Sample, of the Presbyterian Church, the former in the German and the latter in the English language. The officers chosen were: President, Rev. Dr. Endress; Vice Presidents, Rev. Joseph Clarkson, St. James' Episcopal, and Rev. Stephen Boyer, Methodist Church; Secretary, Samuel White, Esq.; Corresponding Secretary, Charles Smith, Esq.; Treasurer, William Kirkpatrick.

At this time the postoffice of the borough was presided over by a woman, Mrs. Ann Moore, widow of Dr. George Moore, a prominent physician. It is said he was the family physician of Dr. John L. Atlee's father, and was the first doctor to introduce vaccination into Lancaster, and also that Walter L. Atlee, Esq., was the first person to be vaccinated in Lancaster.

1817.—Tuesday, May 6. The second anniversary was held in the Court

House at 10 o'clock a. m. After addresses in the English and German languages, reports were submitted that a depository had been established at William Dickson's book store on North Queen street, and that a number of destitute families had been supplied with the Scriptures. All the old officers were re-elected, and James Houston was made an additional corresponding secretary. At this time Samuel Carpenter was Chief Burgess of the borough.

1818.—Tuesday, May 5. The third anniversary was observed in the Court House, with the usual addresses in the English and German languages, Vice President Dr. Kerr presiding. The auditors, Adam Reigart and Henry Slaymaker, reported having examined Treasurer Kirkpatrick's books and found them correct, with receipts for the year of \$445.75 and expenditures of \$306.10. The only change in the officers were Rev. Dr. Kerr was made president and Walter Franklin, Esq., one of the secretaries.

During this year the city was incorporated and John Passmore served as the first Mayor of Lancaster city.

1819.—Tuesday, May 4. The fourth anniversary was observed in the usual way at the Court House. The only change in the officers was Joseph Ogilby, secretary, in place of Samuel White, deceased, and Rev. John Elliot, pastor of the Church of God, added to the Board of Directors. An evening service was also held and Dr. Kerr preached from Matthew 16:3. A large audience was present, and the offering amounted to between \$50 and \$60.

1820.—Tuesday, May 2. The fifth anniversary differed little from the preceding ones, with the exception that a sermon was preached in the evening in Trinity Lutheran Church

by Rev. Joseph Boyer. The officers of the previous year were continued, with the exception that George B. Porter, Esq., a member of the Lancaster Bar, and a trustee of the Presbyterian Church, was made secretary.

1821—Tuesday, May 8. The place of holding the sixth anniversary was changed from the Court House to the Presbyterian Church, and was held at 11 o'clock a. m. The reports indicated that considerable work had been done in canvassing the city and county. A large number of families had been supplied with the Scriptures, some of which were paid for and others given gratuitously. A sermon was preached in the evening in Trinity Lutheran Church by the pastor, Dr. Endress. The officers remained practically the same.

Up to this point we had to depend on the files of the Lancaster papers, mostly the Intelligencer, for our information. But from here on the minutes of the society are intact, with the exception of a break of a few years from 1847 to 1850.

1822—During this year Rev. Joseph Clarkson, rector of St. James' Episcopal Church, became president, and continued as such up to the time of his death in 1830. Henry Y. Slaymaker, a prominent member of that old Lancaster family, was the secretary. Rev. William Ashmeade, pastor of the Presbyterian Church, here became an active participant in the work. A new or revised constitution was adopted and printed. A donation of \$75 was sent to the American Bible Society, in return for which they were to send a number of copies of the Scriptures. It was also decided to hold the future meetings of the board in the session room of the Presbyterian Church. The anniversary

was held in St. James' Episcopal Church.

The secretary has in his possession original copies of letters of November and December, 1822 from the American Bible Society, acknowledging the receipt of money sent them, also returning thanks for a copy of the constitution.

1823—The officers of the preceding year were retained. Some prominent new additions were: Rev. William A. Muhlenberg, co-rector of St. James' Episcopal Church; George Bryan, Esq., who later became chief clerk of the State Senate and subsequently Auditor General of Pennsylvania; John Whiteside, Esq., a leading citizen, a member of the Legislature and later a Congressman, and later still kept and owned the Fountain Inn, on South Queen street.

We also notice an action donating six Testaments to the use of the Adult free School and another for twelve Testaments for the Presbyterian Sunday-school, a letter of which the secretary holds the original copy from the American Bible Society, stating that a request had been received by them from a Mr. Brown, asking for a donation of twelve Bibles for use in a Sunday-school six miles south of Lancaster. A committee was appointed to look the matter up, and the gentleman got the Bibles. A Mr. James Calhoun bequeathed to the use of the society \$100. We were unable to locate this gentleman, perhaps because of his unusual generosity. At this time the name of Dr. Samuel Humes, one of Lancaster's prominent old-time physicians, comes frequently into the record. The anniversary was held in the Presbyterian Church.

During this year the society lost by

death one of its original, faithful and zealous lay members, William Dickson, editor and publisher of the *Intelligencer*. It may be of interest to state that his widow, Mrs. Mary Dickson, with some assistance, continued the publication of the paper for fourteen years after her husband's death, and that its columns were always open to the cause of the society. She also was appointed and became the efficient postmistress of the Lancaster office.

1824—This was an active year for the society. At the first meeting of the board, a committee was appointed to visit Columbia, with a view of establishing a branch society in that place. They accomplished their purpose, and we are glad to say it still lives and thrives, with Rev. Dr. J. H. Pannebecker as president, and Rev. W. J. Lindsay, secretary, and William H. Moore, treasurer. A depository is maintained on Locust street, near Fourth.

Another forward step was the appointment of a committee of two for each of four wards of the city, to make a canvass of the families and report those destitute of the Holy Scriptures. These reported as follows: S. E. ward, fifty families; S. W. ward, twenty-seven; N. W. ward, forty-five; N. E. ward, sixty-two. Seventy-five dollars was forwarded to the American Society for copies to supply these families. William Kirkpatrick, who had been treasurer since its organization, was made one of the vice presidents, and George Bryan, Esq., took his place as treasurer. The anniversary was held in the Moravian Church.

1825-26-27—At a meeting of the board, William Kirkpatrick, Esq., one of the vice presidents, was elected a

delegate to attend the annual meeting of the American Bible Society in New York City in May, 1825, and the sum of \$100 was donated to the parent society, and "further, be it resolved that Mr. Kirkpatrick be requested to advance the \$100 in anticipation of said sum accruing from the United States on account of a certificate held by him in favor of the society."

For some reason there are no meetings recorded for 1826, probably on account of the necessary resignation of Secretary Slaymaker. There was also some trouble in securing a place for and a person to take charge of the depository, when a Miss Jane Miller offered, at her residence, a room for the purpose, and she was elected librarian, and allowed 5 per cent. of the amount of her sales, as compensation. A donation of \$100 was made to the American Society, of which books to the amount of \$50 were to be returned. The anniversary was held in St. James' Episcopal Church. Robert D. Carson was elected secretary.

At a meeting of the board in 1827 it was decided to co-operate with the Pennsylvania Bible Society in their proposed effort to supply every destitute family in the State with a copy of the Holy Scriptures within a term of three years, and a committee was appointed to arrange for a public meeting of the citizens of Lancaster in St. James' Episcopal Church on Monday evening, November 5, 1827.

The following report of this meeting is copied from the files of one of the Lancaster papers: "A respectable meeting of the citizens of Lancaster convened in St. James' Episcopal Church on Monday evening, November 5. The object of the meeting was

stated by the rector, Rev. Joseph Clarkson; when on motion the Hon. Nathaniel Lightner, Mayor of the city, was called to the chair and George Louis Mayer elected secretary.

"On motion of Rev. Dr. Samuel Bowman, it was unanimously resolved that this meeting has heard, with no ordinary pleasure, of the resolution recently adopted by the Philadelphia Bible Society, to supply every destitute family in the State of Pennsylvania with a copy of the Sacred Scriptures within the term of three years, and sooner if it shall be found practicable.

"On motion of Rev. William Ashmeade, it was unanimously resolved that this meeting is gratified to learn that the managers of the Auxilliary Bible Society of Lancaster has pledged itself to co-operate with the managers of the Philadelphia Bible Society in supplying every destitute family in our own county with a copy of the Sacred Scriptures.

"On motion the following gentlemen were selected to wait upon the citizens of Lancaster for contributions to aid in the carrying out of this movement: George Louis Mayer and Robert D. Carson, for the Northeast ward; Robert Evans and Thomas Jeffries, Southeast ward; John F. Steinman and George H. Krug, Southwest ward; John Myer and Joseph Ogilby, Northwest ward. Subsequently Christopher Hager and William Boys were added to this committee.

"On motion all the churches in the county were requested to lift an offering for this object prior to the first of January, 1828, and that all monies be forwarded to George Bryan, treasurer of this society.

“Resolved, That the proceedings of this meeting be published in all the city and county papers, also in those of Philadelphia.

“Nathaniel Lightner, Chairman; George Louis Mayer, Secretary.”

It is a pleasure to note how readily some of the most prominent and influential citizens of our town took hold of this matter.

1828-29—A number of new names now appear in the activities of the society. Rev. Dr. Samuel Bowman, Episcopal; Rev. Dr. John C. Baker, Lutheran, and Laymen Robert Clark, Alexander Ewing, Jacob McCulley, John Buchanan, were especially active. The latter part of 1829 was largely taken up with the work of canvassing the county for funds and in supplying destitute families with the Scriptures.

1830.—On January 25, of this year, the society lost, by death, its faithful president, the Rev. Joseph Clarkson, rector of St. James' Episcopal Church, who had served since 1822.

Rev. Dr. John C. Baker, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, was unanimously chosen to succeed Dr. Clarkson. The names of Dr. M. M. Moore, Emanuel Sheaffer, David Conyngham, and Dr. George B. Kerfoot now come into the record. The latter was elected librarian and took charge of the depository.

1831-1840—During these nine years the general routine work of the society was kept steadily in motion. At intervals the services of a colporteur were engaged in canvassing the county, and reports of his work were made at the anniversaries, which were regularly observed. The officers were: President, Rev. Dr. Baker; Vice President, Adam Reigart and William

Kirkpatrick; Secretary, George Bryan: Treasurer, Robert Conyngham. The clergymen identified during this time were Revs. Dickinson, Davie McNair, Presbyterian; Revs. Reichel, Vanvleck, Reinke, Bahnson, Moravian; Revs. Hoffmeier, Brunner, Glessner, Reformed. New additions among the laity were John F. Heinitsh, John S. Gable, Dr. John Miller, Christian Gast, C. F. Hoffmeier, Thomas Dickey, Esq., John Culbert, George H. Bomberger, Judge Oristus Collins. The Mr. Bomberger here mentioned was the father of the Rev. J. H. A. Bomberger, D.D., for many years president of Ursinus College, and a theologian of wide repute in the Reformed Church.

1841-1852—Through the efforts of Judge Oristus Collins, President Judge of the Courts of Lancaster county, and a zealous friend of the Bible cause, the society agreed to furnish Bibles gratuitously to needy Sunday-schools in the city and county. The name of Dr. John L. Atlee appears prominent in the early part of this period. He seconded and favored a motion, which was adopted, to issue and forward to every assessor in the county a circular letter requesting them to ascertain any families in their district that were without the Bible, and forward names and addresses to the society. C. F. Hoffmeier was the treasurer at this time.

In 1842 Dr. John L. Atlee was named as chairman of a committee of three to prepare the annual report to be read at the anniversary. About this time Dr. John Miller, a prominent physician; Hon. Benjamin Champneys, James Hoey, Henry K. Reed, David Longenecker, James Whitehill and B. D. Gill were particularly active in its affairs.

Volunteer committees of ladies to canvass the city for contributions and to ascertain family needs in the Scriptural line were offered the society. First Methodist Church, Miss Harriet Galebach, Miss Margaret Samson; First Reformed, Miss Sybilla Heitshu, Miss Mary Sener; Trinity Lutheran, Mrs. Bear, Mrs. Thompson.

During the year 1845 the Board decided to hold regular quarterly public meetings, open to all persons, and among the regulations made for conducting the same were that the subject should be previously announced and shall be open to all parties, but that no one should be allowed to speak more than twenty-five minutes, and that politics should be strictly excluded; and, further, that no meeting shall be continued longer than two hours.

New names among the laity were Joseph Eberman, Charles Boughter, John Sener, William Russell and John W. Hubley. The treasurer was Samuel Beam. The records show only three assessors from the county reporting families without the Bible. Conestoga, eight; Leacock, eighteen; Martic, seventeen.

In the latter part of 1852 Rev. Dr. Baker resigned the presidency on account of removal from the city. He had served continuously for twenty-two years, and was rarely absent from any of its meetings. He had accepted a call to a Philadelphia charge, and died there in 1859. His remains lie buried in our own Woodward Hill Cemetery.

1852-1864—Rev. Nathaniel A. Keyes, pastor of St. Paul's Reformed Church, was elected to succeed Dr. Baker, and early in his term a united effort was made to increase the yearly income through an annual membership at one dollar each, and we

find a record of three hundred and sixty names for the years 1852-53, nearly all of whom are marked paid. We append a number of these to show the class of people who manifested an interest in this organization: Rev. Dr. Theodore Appel, the Misses Andrews, Frederick A. Achey, ex-President James Buchanan, Jacob Bausman, B. C. Bachman, John Baer, Mr. and Mrs. James Black, William G. Baker, Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Bates, Charles Boughter, Hon. Judge Thomas Clark, Hon. B. F. Champneys, Mrs. Champneys, Dr. Cassidy, David Conyngham, Miss Ann Demuth, Mrs. Mary Dickson, Michael Diffenderfer, George M. Diller, Mr. and Mrs. Nathaniel Ellmaker, Mr. and Mrs. Reah Frazer, George Ford, John Gorrecht, Hugh S. Gara, Christian Gast, John W. Hubley, Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Hager, Mr. and Mrs. John F. Heinitsh, Daniel Heitshu, Isaac Hollinger, Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Heinitsh, Amos A. Hershey, Mrs. John Hamilton, Henry Haverstick, George W. Hensel, Henry Hostetter, Mr. and Mrs. Christian Kieffer, M. O. Kline, John Kepler, Mr. and Mrs. John F. Long, Jesse Landis, Mr. and Mrs. David Longenecker, Hon. Judge Livingston, Hon. H. G. Long, Miss Kate Long, Jacob Landis, Dr. M. M. Moore, Dr. Muhlenberg, Watson H. Miller, Matilda McCaskey, John S. Miller, Dr. McCalla, Mrs. Sarah Porter, Hon. Judge Patterson, Mrs. Patterson, Mr. and Mrs. William Peiper, Mr. and Mrs. John H. Pearsol, James Risk, Mr. and Mrs. George K. Reed, Horace Rathvon, Emanuel C. Reigart, Christian Rine, Mr. and Mrs. Emanuel Sheaffer, John D. Skiles, George D. Sprecher, John F. Shroder, Henry Stoek, Christian Sprenger, J. J. Sprenger, Mr. and Mrs. George M. Steinman, George Shindel, Mr. and

Mrs. George Sanderson, Mr. and Mrs. Henry E. Slaymaker, John K. Thompson, Hon. Thaddeus Stevens, Mrs. George B. Withers, Catharine Yeates, Mrs. Matthias Zahm, Miss Catharine Zimmerman.

The anniversary following the procuring of this large list of annual members brought out a large throng of people in the fall of 1853, and again put the organization on a firm footing. In a few years, however, the interest began again to lag, probably from the want of some one to personally look up the annual contributing membership.

In 1855 a city society, auxiliary to the county organization, was effected. By this arrangement it was hoped that the various branch societies that had been established throughout the county would become more active. In this connection it was decided to hold an annual or semi-annual meeting or convention of all the organizations combined, at such place as might be decided upon, for consultation and extension of the Bible cause. Several such conventions were held, but they failed to arouse the interest hoped for, and after a few years, or about 1860, the old title, the "Lancaster County Auxiliary Bible Society," was again assumed.

The officers of this auxiliary city society, from its organization in 1855 to 1861, were: Presidents, Revs. Alfred Nevin, Krotel, Harbaugh, Appleton; Secretaries, Henry Stoek, Rev. W. E. Locke, F. W. Bates, James Black; Treasurer, William G. Baker, William Murray, A. W. Russel. During the year 1856-57, Rev. John Tucker, a retired minister, was engaged to canvass the city and Lancaster township. He called upon 2,525 families, of whom 316 were entirely destitute of any portion of the Holy Scriptures. To these

he sold at cost price one hundred copies of the Bible, 65 copies of the Testament, and gave away 38 Bibles and 15 Testaments, thus supplying 218 families.

During this period the officers of the county organization were practically the same as the city, with the exception of the years 1855-58, when Dr. John Miller and Rev. I. S. Demund, represented the head of the county organization.

We come now to the dreadful period of the Civil War, and many of our citizens will recall the encampment near the city limits, in 1861, of the 1st and 2d Ohio regiments of volunteers on their way to the front in defense of our country. While located here many applications for copies of the Scriptures were made by these soldier boys. The depository was entirely exhausted of copies suitable for the purpose, more than 250 having been supplied. A special offering was asked for from the churches, and they nobly responded with a sum sufficiently large for an adequate supply.

A special meeting of the society was called and the President (Rev. E. W. Appleton, rector of St. John's Episcopal Church), was directed to present to each of our citizens, who had or may volunteer in defense of our country, a copy of the Scriptures.

If this society had never done anything outside of this one act, it alone would have been, in the writer's opinion, a sufficient reason for its establishment.

1861-65—Owing to the general unrest caused by the War of the Rebellion, the affairs of the society were almost at a stand-still during this period.

In 1864 Rev. I. S. Demund, pastor of St. Paul's Reformed Church, having been called to another field, Rev. D.

P. Rosenmiller was elected President; John S. Gable and Christian Gast, Vice Presidents; Hugh S. Gara, Secretary; John W. Hubley, Treasurer and Librarian. Revs. Laird, Sigler, Barker, Crouch, Kremer, Carrow, Powell, Hoppe, Bigler and Gotwald, were on the Executive Committee. The anniversary was held in the First Reformed Church, on Sunday evening, December 11th. The treasurer's report showed receipts for the year of \$650.99, and disbursements, \$558.33. The offering of the evening was \$50, and, in addition, an unnamed citizen contributed \$100.

1865-71—At its fiftieth anniversary, held in December, 1865, it was stated in the president's report that, since its organization, the society had received \$10,519.99, of which sum \$899 had been donated to the parent society. The balance, \$9,620, was used in the circulation of 32,670 copies of the Scriptures in our own city and county.

In 1867 a colporteur was employed to canvass the county, the Ladies' Tract Society performing the same service for the city. A number of Sunday-schools, the almshouse, the Children's Home and some private families were supplied with Bibles and Testaments. The treasurer reported receipts of \$810.50, and disbursements of \$612.21.

1871-80 Rev. Bishop Bigler, of the Moravian Church, was now the president, and the names of a number of new clergymen are introduced. Revs. Dr. Greenwald, George Robinson, J. E. Smith, B. C. Suesserott, J. C. Gregg, C. Reimensnyder, and Laymen John H. Pearsol, J. M. W. Geist (late editor of *The New Era*); D. S. Bare was the secretary and George Sanderson, a prominent citizen, newspaper man and politician, who served as Mayor of the city for nine years.

was elected treasurer and librarian, and for a number of years had charge of the Depository at his residence, on North Duke street, and during the years 1871-72 four hundred and ninety-eight volumes were sold and donated.

An abstract from the president's report reads, "We call ourselves the Lancaster County Bible Society. The contributions by which the society is sustained came chiefly from the city. The county, aside from the city, contributing but a small proportion of the amount received."

Rev. J. V. Eckert was continued as colporteur, and had sold books to the amount of \$437.85.

At the annual business meeting of the society held on Thanksgiving Day, November 26, 1874, the name was again changed to the Lancaster City Bible Society, and which it has retained ever since.

In 1875 the president, the much-beloved Bishop Bigler, departed this life. Rev. Dr. Dobbins, pastor of the First Methodist Church, was chosen to fill the vacancy. Death again in 1876 took one of the society's active workers, in the person of Rev. B. C. Suesserott. Rev. D. P. Rosenmiller was again elected president in 1877. Hon. Judge Patterson was corresponding secretary. Revs. Shumaker, Mitchell, Smith, Haupt, Geisinger, Mayser, Soule, Huffort, Kuehling, Peters, Cummings, J. Richards Boyle and Dr. John S. Stahr were active in its ranks, as were Laymen George K. Reed and D. C. Haverstick.

Branch organizations had been established at Columbia, Churchtown, Colerain, Chestnut Level, Christiana, Adamstown, Ephrata, New Holland, Gap, Georgetown, Millersville, Reams-town, Bainbridge, Marietta, Mount Nebo, Washington, Safe Harbor, Gor-

donville, Bird-in-Hand, Little Britain, Strasburg, Elizabethtown and Manheim. Of these twenty-three Columbia alone survives.

1880-90—Again death claimed one of the society's long-time presidents, the Rev. D. P. Rosenmiller. He was succeeded by Rev. Dr. James Y. Mitchell, pastor of the Presbyterian Church. After serving one year he was succeeded by Rev. John A. Peters, pastor of the First Reformed Church.

At a meeting in 1881 Hon. Judge Patterson, James Black, Esq., George K. Reed, John W. Hubley and D. S. Bare were elected life members.

In 1882, D. S. Bare, who had been secretary for fifteen years, was removed by death, and was succeeded by the present incumbent, D. C. Haverstick. In December of this year Rev. C. Reimensnyder was made president; Rev. Sylvanus Stahl and Rev. J. Max Hark, vice presidents; S. S. High, treasurer. In 1883 the anniversary was observed in Trinity Lutheran, Presbyterian, Moravian and Zion Lutheran churches. Among the speakers were Rev. Charles L. Fry, Rev. E. Meister, Rev. Dahlman and Rev. Dr. Torrence, of Philadelphia. A donation each of seventy-five dollars was made to the Pennsylvania and American societies. The depository was established in the Y. M. C. A. building, on South Queen street.

In 1885 Rev. Dr. Shumaker was elected president, followed by Rev. Dr. Titzel in 1887, and during this year a new or revised constitution, and which is still in force, was adopted. At the anniversary services in Grace Lutheran Church addresses were delivered by Rev. J. Max Hark and Rev. J. W. Meminger.

Rev. Dr. C. Elvin Haupt, pastor of

Grace Lutheran Church, was named for president in 1889. The new president suggested a radical change in the method of observing the society's anniversaries, namely, the grouping of various congregations and the holding of the services in eight or ten of the different churches. This was partially arranged, services being conducted in Trinity Lutheran, First Reformed, Moravian, Church of God, Covenant U. B. and Strawberry street African M. E.

Early in 1892 the society's long-time and devoted corresponding secretary, Hon. Judge D. W. Patterson, passed to his final rest. Laymen S. S. High and D. C. Haverstick were elected life members.

Rev. Dr. Haupt's idea of celebrating the anniversary was enlarged upon by being observed in all of the Protestant churches of the city.

Rev. Dr. B. F. Alleman, pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church, was elected president in 1895, and Rev. J. T. Satchell as one of the vice presidents. Rev. Clarence E. Eberman, pastor of the Moravian Church, succeeded Dr. Alleman in 1896.

1900-1910.—Rev. Dr. J. W. Meminger, pastor of St. Paul's Reformed Church, became president in 1901 and was succeeded by Rev. Dr. D. W. Gerhard in 1902, who was followed in 1903 by Rev. John W. Richards, pastor of Christ Lutheran Church. Rev. Dr. C. E. Griffiths and Rev. Dr. E. H. Romig, vice presidents. Rev. Dr. Whitteker, of Trinity Lutheran, and Rev. Ridgeway, of St. Paul's Methodist, were on the executive committee.

The death of ex-president Rev. Clarence E. Eberman, D. D., was announced as having occurred while he was in the discharge of his duties as field secretary of the United Christian

Endeavor Societies, on Easter Sunday, April 12, 1903, in Canada. Commemorative action was taken.

Rev. J. Hunter Watts, pastor of St. Andrew's Reformed Church, was made president in 1904. Revs. George P. Seibel and Walter Whitley were added to the executive committee. The death of William A. Heitshu, for many years the efficient treasurer, was noted with expressions of affection and regret. A month later his son, W. A. Heitshu, was chosen to take his father's place.

About this time (1905) a communication was received from the Columbia Bible Society, asking co-operation in the employment of a colporteur to labor among the hundreds of employes, mostly foreigners, engaged in building the low grade line of the Pennsylvania Railroad along the Susquehanna river. The assistance asked for was gladly given, and a contribution of \$38 subsequently made toward this object. It was learned later on that this work was very much appreciated, especially by the better class of the laborers. Note was taken of the death of former president, Rev. D. W. Gerhard, D. D.

Rev. Dr. H. A. Gerdson, pastor of the Moravian Church, was chosen as the head of the Society in 1906, and was followed in 1907 by Rev. E. A. G. Bossler, with Revs. R. L. Clark, Jackson and LaPish on the executive committee. During 1908 Rev. D. G. Glass, of Faith Reformed Church, was president.

Rev. W. Stuart Cramer, pastor of First Reformed Church, was elected in 1909, and still holds the position. Revs. D. A. Medlar, J. W. Deshong and I. Moyer Hershey were on the executive committee. During the first

year of Rev. Cramer's incumbency a movement was started, mainly through his efforts, to employ a colporteur to canvass the city to gather statistics in the line of church affiliations and the needs that might exist among the destitute for copies of the Holy Scriptures. A young man, Rev. W. S. Gerhard, was engaged, and he entered upon his work with commendable energy and spirit, and finally reported that he had made 3,149 visits, had filled out 607 statistical cards and had given away 60 copies of the Holy Scriptures. Had sold Bibles to the amount of \$16.86. He had found about seventy homes without the Bible.

As to statistics noted, first, those who had absolutely no church connection. Second, those who were related to a church through the children going to Sunday-school, while they themselves did not attend. Third, those who belonged to church, but since moving to the city had not attended. He remarks that he was surprised at the large number of families who had been living in Lancaster for ten, fifteen or twenty years that had not attended church in that time. Rev. Gerhard was unable to finish the canvass, and E. M. Dietrich, a Seminary student, was engaged to take up and finish the work, and finally reported that he had made 1,560 calls, and returned the names of 240 families without any church connection. In February, 1909, the Society received \$10 from an unnamed friend.

1910 11-12.—During this period the officers, with a few exceptions, remained the same. Rev. George Israel Browne, rector of St. John's Episcopal Church, and Rev. John H. Strenger,

pastor of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, became vice presidents. Rev. E. L. Wessinger and Rev. James Armentrout were on the executive committee. Layman S. R. Graybill was elected treasurer.

Bibles were placed gratuitously in the following hotels during the year 1912: Wheatland, 100; Stevens House, 100; Franklin House, 60; Lincoln, 60; Stevens Industrial School, 30: The Prison and Witmer Home were also given copies. One hundred and sixty-five Bibles and Testaments were sold, and quite a number given away to individuals.

1913-14—The work of distributing Bibles was continued, the General Hospital coming in for a share. First Vice President Rev. George Israel Browne, at the request of the president, seconded by the executive committee, was named to prepare the annual report of the society for the year 1913, the 98th anniversary. The result was an eloquent and pointed presentation of the work and aims of this aged organization.

At the business meeting in January, 1914, the subject of the observance of the society's one hundredth anniversary, occurring on February 8, 1915, was discussed, and committees for the purpose were named as follows: Programme, Rev. E. A. Bawden, D.D., Rev. George Israel Browne, M.A., Rev. J. W. Meminger, D.D., Rev. E. L. Wessinger, Rev. H. W. Haring, D.D., and Rev. George W. Richards, D. D. Committee for procuring and placing on exhibition, during the anniversary year, any copies of the Bible, or parts thereof, that may have been printed and published in Lancaster city or county, since its organization as a county: Rev. H. A. Gerdson, D.D., Rev. C. E. Haupt, D.D., Rev.

D. G. Glass, Rev. H. M. J. Klein, D.D., and Laymen Hon. W. U. Hensel and George Steinman, Esq.

A motion also prevailed to request the Lancaster County Historical Society to name someone to prepare a historical record of the Bible Society, since its organization, and make it a part of its programme for one of its meetings in the early part of the year 1915.

Subsequently, the secretary of the Bible Society, Mr. D. C. Haverstick, was designated for the purpose.

All the labor required in the transaction of the affairs of the society is given gratuitously. And the organization is entirely dependent upon the voluntary contributions of the churches and individuals for its support in the carrying out of its object.

All resident ministers of the city, and all other persons contributing annually fifty cents to its funds, shall be members of this society. Any person paying, or in whose behalf there may be paid, ten dollars, shall be constituted a member of this society for life.

1915—The officers of the society elected in January of this year are: President, Rev. W. Stuart Cramer; Vice Presidents, Rev. Dr. Bawden, Rev. E. L. Wessinger; Secretary, D. C. Haverstick; Treasurer, S. R. Graybill; Librarian, E. B. Searles; Executive Committee, Rev. B. F. Alleman, Rev. Dr. C. E. Haupt, Rev. George Israel Browne, Rev. Dr. H. A. Gerdson and Layman Jacob E. Ranck.

The life members of the society, living at this date, are: Mrs. H. K. Baumgardner, Mrs. Sarah Halbach, Miss Emma Sener, H. A. Byerley, S. R. Graybill, Jacob E. Ranck, Hon. W. U. Hensel, John S. Gleim, Louis Baumann, Wesley A. Rooney, H. S. Gruger, Burch Kieffer, D. C. Haverstick.

As the last stage in the one hun-

dred years of research is reached, we find by a brief and hasty summary, that the society has received, approximately, since its organization, funds to the amount of \$15,970, of which it donated to the Pennsylvania and American Bible Societies, \$2,674, and \$50 to our own City Tract Society. The balance \$13,246 was spent, in the city and county of Lancaster, in the circulation of 42,670 copies of the Holy Scriptures.

In closing we desire to express our appreciation of the courtesy extended paper of a hundred years ago.

In a few instances we have also made use of the Mombert and Harris histories of Lancaster county, for biographical information.

Author: Haverstick, David C.

Title: Lancaster Bible Society, 1815-1915 / by David C. Haverstick.

Primary Material: Book

Subject(s): Lancaster Bible Society (Lancaster, Pa.)--History.
Lancaster County Auxiliary Bible Society (Pa.)--History.
Bible--Publication and distribution--United States.
Lancaster (Pa.)--Religious life.

Publisher: Lancaster, Pa. : Lancaster County Historical Society, 1915

Description: 35-61 p. ; 23 cm.

Series: Journal of the Lancaster County Historical Society ; v. 19,
no. 2

Call Number: 974.9 L245 v.19

Location: LCHSJL -- Journal Article (reading room)

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