

Reformed Church Gleanings

A Monthly Journal Devoted to the Interests of the New Holland Charge, New Holland, Lancaster County, Pa.

Vol. I.

NEW HOLLAND, PA., APRIL, 1908.

No. 7.

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS OF ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH (Concluded).

By Frank R. Diffenderfer, Litt. D.

Some Early Church Members.

As to the general membership of the church I cannot say much; I was but a boy at that early period, and while I knew most of the members and was known by them, perhaps there was, naturally, only a limited acquaintanceship. I knew the elder Fausman as well as his two sons Isaac and John. They lived between New Holland and Blue Ball. The faces of Isaac and Christian Schnader are well remembered. Hon. William Hiester, seated in his arm-chair before the chancel, was a familiar figure. Some of my early reading was done with books from his library. The Goshens, Richard, the father, and the sons, William and Isaac, were near neighbors. The entire family, as well as the son-in-law, John W. Sheaffer, still living in Sterling, Ill., were staunch supporters of the church, as were Henry Shirk, the Diffenderfers, Eckerts and others. Of the later generations I know a good many slightly and more by their names. The church fathers I knew when a boy, have all or nearly all gone over to the other side. They fought a good fight; they kept the faith in the church militant and are reunited in the church triumphant.

Impressions of St. Stephen's.

Seventy five years ago St. Stephen's church building was perhaps as imposing a church as was to be found in Lancaster county, outside of Lancaster city. To the average village boy, whose acquaintance with the statelier church architecture of the cities was limited if not altogether absent, it seemed a grand edifice. As a young lad I read of the great churches and cathedrals beyond the sea, and in my uncertainty often wondered if they excelled St. Stephen's. Its spire always excited my admiration and as often as I was permitted, I climbed its series of ladders to the open space above the bells. And those bells, how well I remember them! Thomas Mears, London, were the words cast

in the metal, and the date also; I think it was 1802, but of that I am not sure. What a rivalry there was among some of us boys to be allowed to pull the bell-rope when the call for service was made! I remember that we tried to pull so hard on the rope that the return swing of the bell would lift us several feet from the floor, and yet that pleasure was tempered by the fear that some time the bell might be swung around altogether and the boy at the rope be carried up against the floor above. Blessed days of early boyhood! How vain and empty are all the events of later years compared with those that filled the heart in that early time. What though later years may bring plaudits and praises, successes and honors, what are all these compared with the innocent and abounding pleasures of a happy boyhood.

Learn well the lessons of thy early prime,

It cometh not again, that golden time.

Conclusion.

But these recollections have unintentionally lengthened themselves far beyond what was intended at the outset. With the relation of an incident that shows that even early boyhood was not always sunshine and flowers, they shall be brought to a close. It was a warm summer Sunday evening that I and several other boys of my age started for the evening service. We passed a pear tree by the way. Was there ever a boy who could pass a tree loaded with fruit, without filling his pockets with the latter, even though it was still green and hard? If there was he was not with us that warm Sunday evening. When we reached the church, all the doors were open and so were the windows on the southern front. As we did not care to mix with our elders who were standing on the greensward below, we went into the gallery and looked out, enjoying ourselves as young boys are wont to do on such occasions. While leaning out of a window I saw a neighbor standing immediately below. The evening was a warm one, and as I looked out our hot-tempered, little German neighbor removed his hat,

exposed a head without much hirsute covering and wiped his face with the customary bandanna. The temptation was great and I know not what demon of mischief seized upon me, as I was not naturally vicious, but I could not resist the temptation to drop a pear upon the exposed pate. Unfortunately my aim was good, my marksmanship excellent and accurate, and impelled by the law of gravitation, that green pear shot earthward like a flash on its mission of mischief. Had I withdrawn my head, all might still have gone well, but as all good marksmen like to see where their shot strikes, I remained on the spot. The victim looked up and recognized me, entered the church, ascended the gallery, made assurance doubly sure, and threatened me with his direst vengeance. The next day the story was repeated to my father, and I am sure none of the details were forgotten or omitted. A long and impressive lecture on the enormity of my offense was the result. After that was over, I was subjected to still another interview, where the proceedings, instead of being verbal as before, made such an impression on both mind and body that I preserve a lively recollection of the same down to this very hour. The admonitions of my father were effectual and to the best of my knowledge and belief I have dropped no green pears on exposed heads during the past sixty-five years.

THE OFFERINGS FOR THE DEBT OF THE FOREIGN MISSION BOARD.

These offerings were as follows: Zeldenreich, \$1 in cash and one pledge for \$10; St. Stephen's congregation, \$15.50, and Sunday School, \$23.77; St. Paul's congregation, \$20. Total, \$70.27.

When the sting of slander stings thee, let this be thy comfort. They are not the worst fruits on which the wasps alight.—Burger.

How many there are who consult us less to be benefited by our counsel than to be justified by our approbation.

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Rev. John G. Noss, Editor.
Wm. M. Stauffer, Publisher.

Terms: 25 cents a year in advance.
All subscriptions should be sent to the publisher.

APRIL, 1908.

CONGREGATIONAL ITEMS.

Zeltenreich.

The work on the church has been resumed. The floors are laid and the woodwork for the ceiling is almost finished. The plasterers will commence their part of the work early in April. The committee has let the contract for the leaded glass windows to the Quaker City Stained Glass Works, Philadelphia. The amount of the contract for the work, complete, is \$600. The committee is now getting subscriptions from donors of particular windows. As far as possible these windows are to be memorial. The prices range from \$75 to \$20. The memorial inscriptions are to be placed on the glass near the bottom of the windows. Six sections of the larger windows have already been taken. It will be well for those who contemplate putting in memorial windows to mention the fact in good time, so that they may not be disappointed by delaying too long in making known their wishes in the matter. Every one is to have an equal opportunity until all the windows are engaged.

The committee should also be glad to have members or friends of the congregation donate the pulpit, lecturn, altar and pulpit chairs as well as Bibles for the pulpit and lecturn. Any of these articles would be a fitting memorial, by the donor, to some departed loved one, or an equally appropriate memento, in after years, of the donor's active participation in the erection and furnishing of this new church. It ought to be deeply impressed upon every heart interested in this work, that this is in all probability the only opportunity the adult members and friends of this congregation, now living, shall have to take part in a work of this kind. It is well to embrace the opportunity to share in a work that is certain to be appreciated by those who come after us. Money invested in this way now by parents is better for their children than the same amount left to them as a legacy; and it is always a good

thing to make an offering to the Lord. "To the Glory of God" was a favorite inscription in the past on church walls and on its altars, pulpits, etc., and this should still be the chief motive back of our donations to the work in hand. We must not forget that we are engaged in erecting a house "unto the Lord."

It will be well for the members of Zeltenreich to come to the Easter communion in the St. Stephen's church, New Holland, prepared to make a liberal offering toward the apportionment for benevolence. Special envelopes will be provided for this purpose. Under the circumstances but few opportunities have been presented for such offerings during the year. This makes it all the more necessary for larger contributions than usual at the Easter communion, in order to meet the apportionment in full. The deacons would also do well in collecting the pastor's salary as opportunity offers. This is the suggestion of the treasurer, Mr. John Flickinger. The absence of a house of worship on the Zeltenreich ground for nearly a year has naturally resulted in disarranging the usual order of things; but a thoughtful consideration on the part of all concerned will prevent embarrassing results.

The Gleanings regrets the removal to Lancaster of Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Hooper. Mrs. Hooper, though at times afflicted, has been an active and efficient member of the congregation, choir and Sunday School. She is one of the managers also of the Carpet Committee. Her absence will be greatly felt, but her continued interest in the work of the church is assured.

St. Stephen's.

At the annual meeting of the consistory and trustees of this congregation, held March 9, the reports of the treasurer of the congregation and of the trustees showed that all bills were paid during the year, and that respectable balances were on hand in both treasuries. This is quite an improvement over the condition a year ago. At the same meeting, according to the requirements of the Constitution, nominations were made to fill the vacancies in the consistory and trustees at the annual election in connection with the preparatory service this spring. The following are the persons named for the several offices: Elder, Edwin C. Mentzer, Michael R. Good, Jason D. Bair and David K. Patton, two to be elected; deacons, Jonathan H. Weaver, William M. Stauffer, Le Roy W. Groff and M. D. Good, two to

be elected; trustees, Michael R. Good and Henry J. Besore, one to be elected. At the same meeting Miss Marguerite Sutton was elected organist for the coming year.

Two dozen hymnals have been purchased by the Mite Society for the use of the congregation, and have been placed in the book rests of the pews. This was a good investment.

The Sunday School is at present engaged in preparing the programme for the annual Easter service. The school is still increasing in numbers.

St. Paul's.

At a late meeting of the consistory of this congregation the portion of the pastor's salary contributed hitherto was increased by \$25 per annum. The result was evident in the fact that the last quarterly check from the treasurer, Charles E. Seldomridge, to the pastor was larger by \$6.25 than formerly. The increase commenced with January 1, of the present year. The pastor appreciates this generous, voluntary increase. St. Paul's is a small congregation, composed of large-hearted people.

Deacon Charles E. Seldomridge and family have moved to Ephrata. This is another great loss to this little flock. For the present, however, the deacon will attend the services at St. Paul's.

Meeting of the Joint Consistory.

The annual meeting of the joint consistory will be held at 2 P. M., Saturday, April 11, in St. Stephen's church, New Holland. The members of the three consistories will please attend. The three consistories must be represented to constitute a quorum.

MARRIED.

At the parsonage, New Holland, March 12, John L., the youngest son of Elder Edwin C. Mentzer, of New Holland, to Miss Clara E. Stauffer, of East Earl. The young couple will have their home with Elder Mentzer. The Gleanings wishes them much joy and a long and blessed life in the holy estate into which they have entered.

The desire of power in excess caused angels to fall; the desire of knowledge in excess caused man to fall; but in charity is no excess, neither can man or angels come into danger by it.—Bacon.

Man should trust in God as if God did all, and labor himself as if man did all.—Chalmers.

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Deacons.

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Andrew F. Shrom, Voganville.
Charles E. Seldomridge, Voganville.

"I will believe nothing that I do not understand," said a young man to Dr. Parr. "Then, sir, your creed will be the shortest of any man's I ever knew," he answered.

It is one of the precious mysteries of sorrow that it finds solace in unselfish thought.—Garfield.

The imprudent man reflects on what he has said; the wise man, on what he is going to say.

We often hate for one little reason, when there are a thousand why we should love.

The rose does not bloom without thorns. True, but would that the thorns did not outlive the rose!—Richter.

The death of a mother is the first sorrow wept without her.

CHURCH CALENDAR.

The services for April are as follows:

St. Stephen.

Sunday April 5th., 7 p. m.
Sunday April 12th., 10:30 a. m. and 7 p. m.

Passion week service at 7 p. m., from April 13th to 17th.

Good Friday April 17th., 10 a. m. and Confirmation at 7 p. m.

Preparatory service on Saturday April 18th at 2 p. m.

Easter Sunday April 19th., Union Communion of Zeltenreich and St. Stephen, at 10:30 a. m.

Sunday April 26th., 10:30 a. m. and 7 p. m.

Sunday School at 9:15 a. m. and Catechism at 6 p. m. every Sunday.

Mid-week service at 7:30 p. m., each Wednesday.

St. Paul.

Sunday April 5th., 10 a. m.
Sunday April 19th., 2 p. m.

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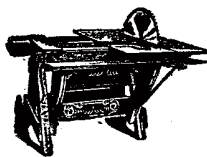
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