

A BEAUTIFUL CHURCH BUILT FROM JUNK



An architectural anomaly, a beautiful building built from scrap material, is the product of the genius, energy and inspiration of an Omaha clergyman. When completed the First German Presbyterian church will present an edifice of stable and dignified beauty, yet all the material that goes into its construction is discarded junk gathered from every available source. It represents what can be accomplished by a few earnest, hard-working men under the leadership of a preacher full of enthusiasm and inspiring optimism.

When he first went to Omaha, three years ago, Rev. Julius F. Schwarz determined that his congregation should have a new church. The fact that the members numbered only 60 and the whole property of the corporation was about \$5,000 troubled him not at all, and he began to build with as much faith as if he had the riches of Solomon. His plan was to gather everywhere, whenever he could, all the old but strong timbers, all the iron junk available for structural use, all the loose and irregular stone and all the generally discarded building materials that could be found in Omaha and from them to build a church. It was not to be a mean and ugly house of worship, but a well-equipped, well arranged, ample meeting place for his people.

He has now extended it to include an 11-room house for his own family and the whole property would have cost \$30,000 if it had been built by contract. As built by Rev. Mr. Schwarz and his fellow laborers it will cost less than \$25,000. The other \$15,000 has been saved to his people by the perseverance, energy and ingenuity of the pastor.

The first charge that Mr. Schwarz took when he left the theological seminary was at Connersville, Ind. For six years he remained there and was called to Omaha three years ago on a recommendation from one of his instructors in the theological school.

At that time the First German Presbyterian was a small frame church. As soon as the new pastor came he announced that the church was too small. To build a church with a membership of 60 seemed out of the question to all but the pastor. He thought he knew a way and he set about it with almost no support, at first, from the others.

For a year he sought for a suitable location and finally purchased the lot the new church is on for \$1,500. When he bought this tract the fund which he drew from amounted to \$57. His first move was to sell the old church for \$1,850. As soon as the lot was paid for he shouldered a spade, and replacing his ministerial dignity with a grim and effective energy he began to dig. The first thing that a church needed was a foundation. He had no money, but he could make the foundation himself, and that would be one step toward it.

He asked for contributions from friends outside of Omaha and waited for his own people to contribute voluntarily. The dollars came slowly, but they came with sufficient steadiness to assure him that he could make a few purchases for a start. While walking on the street one day he saw that in repairing the street the old curbs were being taken up. "These are good blocks," said the pastor-builder, and he bargained with the contractor to take them off his hands. That stone went into the foundation.

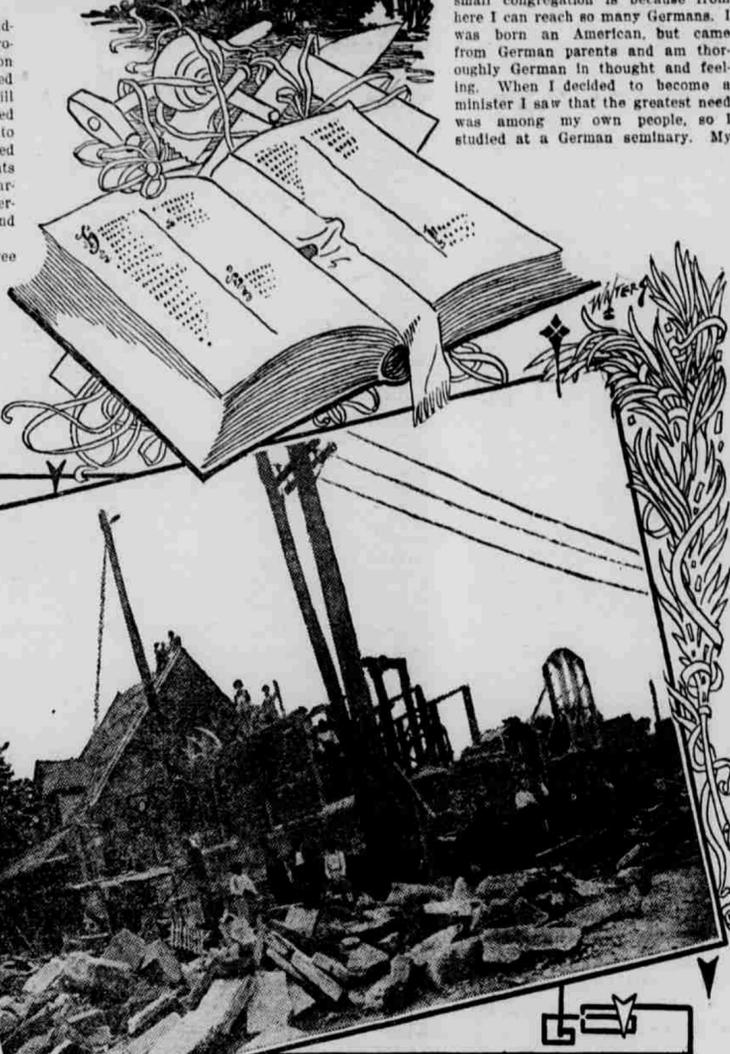
His next lot of material came when the wall that supported the yard of the old Rosewater residence was to be torn down. Men hired by Mr. Schwarz did the work and the brick and stone was taken out and put into the walls that were gradually rising on the church site. Some of his congregation began to contribute two or three days' work with teams in gathering material.

The south steps from the old high school building followed and these made the "water-table" on both sides of the church part of the building. The parsonage end was being added to from the stone that could be picked up around stone yards for small expense and converted into suitable blocks.

An opportunity came to the builders when the driveway was constructed leading down to the Union station on the north side. Here was bought 15,000 feet of lumber that had been used in scaffolding and a carload of fine red sandstone was purchased for \$20. When, a few weeks later, a contractor offered Mr. Schwarz \$70 for that same carload of red stone because he needed it to fill a contract in a hurry, the minister gave up his material and added \$50 clear to the fund. This was the only enterprise for profit that was entered into for the benefit of the cause, except a little deal in lead pipe which the minister had with a prominent fraternal order. He bought some old lead from the lodge for \$1.50 and sold it for \$15 to a junk dealer.

All winter long he has been haunting the repair gangs about the streets, visiting stone yards and junk heaps and adding to the pile of materials that is being made into a building by his men. One of his biggest and most profitable finds was a pair of iron pillars in excellent condition which he bought from the street railway company for their price as old iron. The street railway company also furnished him with the most novel use of old material in the whole building, which is the making of rafters out of old steel rails. The rails are more than strong enough and were bought for the price of junk.

The church, which consists of a basement with a beautiful fireplace and an auditorium which will seat 300, measures 44x73 feet. The roof extends back over the parsonage, making it a full three stories high, with one room in the attic. The house part is 24x50 feet in ground



Beautiful Edifice Being Erected by Rev. Schwartz



Rev. Julius F. Schwarz.

dimensions and has 11 fine rooms.

On the front of the church will be a tower which will be just as high and substantial as it can be made from what is left of the stone after the rest of the structure is finished.

The plans for all of it were sketched by the Rev. Mr. Schwarz and made exact by an architect. There are no specifications in use. The plans are followed not by getting material to fit them, but by conforming them as nearly as possible to material that can be cheaply bought.

The work went slowly, because Mr.

Schwarz could not afford to put on a large force of men. His foreman, Fred Slatner, is a German stone mason. The wages of the men are the one debt which Mr. Schwarz does not intend to neglect and his men are paid every Saturday as if they were working for a wealthy contractor who had thousands to back his operations. To do this the builder has had to rely upon the kindness of his other creditors, who have helped the cause by not pressing their claims.

That \$6,000 that has already been put into the work was gathered mostly from the contributions of friends all over the country. Other pastors have taken up benefit collections, a friend in Indiana sent \$200, and the congregation has contributed far beyond what might be expected from their means. Mr. Schwarz made a house-to-house campaign of four days down in Riley, Kan., and raised \$200 in that way. One of the church trustees, who declared when the project was begun that he would not do anything to aid it, has already given \$100, and others have given \$100 and \$200 contributions. Churches have promised contributions that will probably average \$25 each and several hundred dollars more is expected from that source.

"If I just had \$6,000 more I could finish it," says the minister, and he seems not to lack faith that the \$6,000 will come as it is needed.

Mr. Schwarz's unique undertaking has attracted considerable attention and promises of financial assistance have come in from various parts of the country. These donations to a most worthy cause are for the most part in small amounts, but are none the less appreciated by the energetic pastor and the encouragement thus received has had no little part in helping along the good work. Rev. Schwarz has announced that all outside contributions will be gratefully received and promptly acknowledged.

The biggest addition to the fund that has come so far was the \$2,500 got from selling the old parsonage, which the pastor advised as soon as he saw the possibility of making a home for himself as a part of the new building. It is believed that enough more can easily be raised to put on a roof so that services can be held in the

basement, and after that the money will come in faster. In the meantime the minister is watching everywhere for anything that will make his church more commodious or his home more attractive.

"The reason for my doing all this," said Rev. Mr. Schwarz, as he laid aside the tools with which he was helping the workmen, "is that I believe that right here is the best field for work among the Germans that there is in all the northwest. My life occupation is missionary work among my German people and the only reason why I want to stay here and put up this big church for my small congregation is because from here I can reach so many Germans. I was born an American, but came from German parents and am thoroughly German in thought and feeling. When I decided to become a minister I saw that the greatest need was among my own people, so I studied at a German seminary. My

Scoundrel

By M. BERTIN

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And again to-day, like yesterday, like every day, he found the envelope, the feminine angular hand writing, and it was marked "Personal" and "Important."

As usual Aladjev's first impulse was to throw the letter unread into the burning log-fire; but, also, as usual, he only burned the envelope after he had looked into every corner of the room to make sure that he was unobserved. The letter itself contained the only and ever-same word "Scoundrel."

How long since he began to receive day by day, wherever he might be, such a letter! A rough oblong envelope, bearing his address, in the corner the words "Personal" and "Important," and the letter itself containing the one word "Scoundrel!"

These letters affected Aladjev in a peculiar way. Some outraged soul kept track of him day by day, followed him with unabated hatred and persistently threw in his face that terrible insult. Aladjev started under this accusation; he felt keenly its painful sting, he hated to think of it, was always expecting it, everlastingly fearing it. He tried to throw the letters away unread, but a force stronger than his will, compelled him to open the envelope with trembling hands, to take out the letter, and to search in it for the solution of the riddle that tormented him. In vain. The letter consisted always of the same single word "Scoundrel."

The letter in the oblong envelope dominated Aladjev's life. An insignificant incident nearly overthrew him. One day he met and old friend who insisted that Aladjev come out in the country with him and spend the night there. Upon arising in the morning at the home of this friend the guest found on his dressing-table the oblong envelope. His heart almost stopped beating. He pulled himself together, opened the envelope. "Scoundrel," the one word, nothing more. Even here,



in the home where he was by accident, and where he remained for one night only, this implacable enemy had reached him. Shivering from cold he lay in his bed; an inexplicable dread seized him. He was unable to subdue his excitement, incapable of collecting his thoughts.

The explanation of this incident was simple. Before he left his home Aladjev had mechanically put the freshly arrived letter into his pocket; when the servant was cleaning his clothes the letter dropped to the floor, and the servant put it on the dressing-table. In spite of this obvious explanation, Aladjev was deeply impressed and could not forget the incident.

Years ago Aladjev had begun to write for a liberal newspaper. His writings bore the stamp of purely Russian liberalism, and were permeated with a far-off idealistic, high-minded altruism. They reflected a vague longing toward the good and the true, and an instinctive hatred of the evil and the false. And he was daring almost to foolhardiness. This daring pleased the readers in the provinces and gave Aladjev the reputation of the banner-bearer and leader in the fight for freedom. But besides some sort of reputation in regions where even the foxes bid each other good-night, and five kopeks a line, these writings brought no return to the author. However, he did not become embittered; he merely determined to make a fortune for himself along different lines. A small moribund paper fell into his hands. Being a clever man, Aladjev comprehended that high-mindedness would not make him prosperous. And so he changed his tune.

To those in power he spoke in an apparently daring, critical, unprejudiced vein; but it always happened that after his strongest attack the mighty ones shone far more resplendent than before. For the weary and heavy-laden he had words of fatherly benevolence. With a show of compassion and love he pilloried their failings and vices. He discovered a new formula in writing—a cringing flattery, clad in the garb of high-minded unselfishness, combined with

an unctuous transcendental hatred of humanity.

Th paper edited on these lines flourished. Some loved, others hated it. No one respected it, but everybody read it. Aladjev had reached his goal. His financial resources grew daily, his income became magnificent.

But the years of such feverish activity left their traces. Aladjev grew old and infirm. Against his will there arose in the bottom of his soul old long-forgotten, forcibly-suppressed longings. They brought in their train the painful consciousness of a duality, an unconquerable self-detestation.

His youngest daughter—the only one of his children whom he loved—had left him after she had told him that she was ashamed of her father. She became lost among the hundreds of others pure of heart, unselfish of purpose and deep of feeling like herself.

Over his desk hung her picture. Her eyes looked reproachfully down on him. Right under her beseeching eyes, nay, in defiance of them, he wrote his clever, cold, lying articles. And yet Aladjev felt that there was more holy truth in one of her mistakes than in all his cold calculations.

Insomnia tortured him; in his sleepless nights he could not drive away the all-pervading dread of death. The stillness of the night spoke to him in mystic dreams. The figure of his sorrowing daughter gave battle to his agony in loving kindness.

He feared solitude. Late at night, when he did his work, all the deep shadows seemed to become alive.

His dreams were heavy. He stood before the judgment seat and could not justify himself. Unknowing shades, covered with blood, abject in their despair, passed before him accusingly and their number did not end. "I know them not," he said. "I did not hate them; if I have harmed them it had to be, because it was to my advantage." Their number increased continually, they grew up like a wall between him and the Judge, they reached out after him, showed him their wounds—and, in nameless dread, he crawled out of his bed, shaking in every joint.

The first report of the massacres reached the editorial rooms. His co-workers talked subdued, in whispers. Aladjev said nothing. He wrote an editorial in his usual manner. He said a few words of regret and then he tried to show how unavoidable, how inevitable, how almost necessary were these events. He made use of a knavish trick. The massacres were not, he argued, the result of deliberate incitement; no, on the contrary, the massacres proved how justified had been the campaign of incitement. He was pleased by the thought that he did not incite the riots.

He ate his dinner with relish and was in good humor. He went to the theater to see a French farce, lingered at supper, and came home late, a little tired, but pleasantly agitated. On his dressing-table was the oblong envelope; this time it had a wide black border.

"So you are mourning for the victims of the massacre!" he exclaimed, sneeringly. He placed the letter without opening it under his pillow, and immediately fell asleep.

He awoke suddenly. He did not know what had happened. icy dread was strangling him by the throat. The black border of the letter stood in front of him and gripped his chest. A terrible pain had made him insensible. Soon he began to comprehend. Yes, that was it. Why had he put the letter under his pillow? It was the black border which had terrorized him. Suddenly he saw clearly. Those hateful letters were the dreadful shadows which tortured him. If he could but get rid of them all would be well, the shadows would disappear, and his soul would find peace. He arose from his bed and, without putting on any garment, he tiptoed into his working room. The full moon flooded the room with pale light. He opened the drawer. There were the letters. There were many, many of them. He took them out one by one, read each, and threw it away. But the more he threw away, the more remained. Everything was littered with them—the floor, the chairs, the couch, the tables. He hurried in fear, for these yellowed sheets whispered behind his back—he was afraid to turn around—they conspired against him. They flew around like a flock of white birds, and touched him with their wings. He drove them away, but they surrounded him in ever narrowing circles, their number grew and grew.

The picture was no longer there. He himself had removed it yesterday to escape the everlasting reproach of those mournful eyes. With a wild cry he threw himself against the black-bordered letter.

In the editorial rooms the night force had heard the shriek. They hastened into Aladjev's room. They found him atop of a heap of letters, his face distorted with horror. A few weak signs of life remained in him. They laid him on the couch. Everyone had picked up instinctively one of the letters. The solemn silence around the dying man was broken by a subdued whisper. As they looked at the letter each one pronounced in an undertone the one word, "Scoundrel."

SCIENCE AND FAITH

Is it true that the greater the knowledge the less the religious interest? Are these two persons, the man whose zeal for religion is equalled by his bigotry and ignorance and the other in whom scientific study has dwarfed spiritual sensibility, fair types by which to judge the relations of religion and knowledge?

Is intelligence incompatible with real piety? Will the growth of knowledge bring about the dissolution of religion? Is the life of religious aspirations and feelings out of date in a scientific age such as we are constantly reminded this one is today? Science has overcome superstition; is faith so bound up with superstition that it, too, must go?

We can be sure of one thing, at least; that, no matter what our feelings, theories or ideals may be, we cannot turn our backs on the great world of fact as it is laid before us. The faith that fights facts is committing suicide. Appeals to our fears cannot to-day make the facts less real to us and we know that by them we will have to stand or fall.

If you stop to think about it, there is a striking significance in the fact that this question has arisen. Is there a religion for the intelligent, educated, scientific mind? It suggests another question: Can any other mind fully comprehend the riches and meaning of religion? The unthinking cling to customs, traditions and forms that are the vestiges of truth. The trained mind distinguishes between the garments of truth and truth itself.