

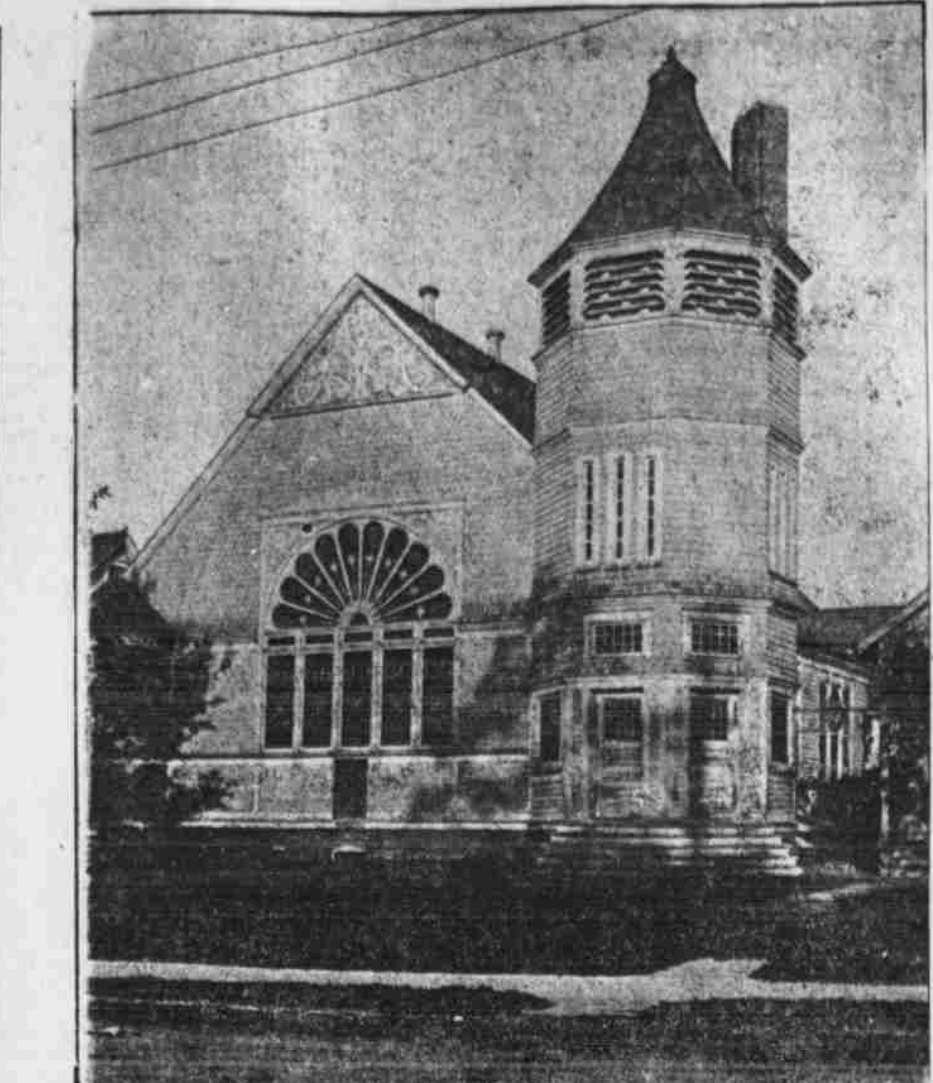
Dedication of Omaha's Magnificent New First Baptist Church



THE OLD FIRST AT FIFTEENTH AND DAVENPORT STREETS.



NEW EDIFICE OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF OMAHA.



BETH EDEN BAPTIST CHURCH.



BUILDING COMMITTEE—WHICH HAD CHARGE OF ERECTION OF NEW CHURCH.

The completion of the new edifice of the First Baptist church marks an important stage in the development of this denomination in Omaha and in the state.

Prominent Names in Membership.

The membership list of this old church has the names of many men and women who have been intimately connected with the life and growth of Omaha.

Baptist work began in Omaha in 1855, when Rev. Stephens opened a mission in a small building at the southeast corner of Capitol avenue and Fifteenth street.

Shortly after Mr. Kermott began his work a lot was purchased on the corner of Davenport and Fifteenth streets, and a foundation put in for a brick edifice.

Several other churches were organized largely by members from the First church. The membership of the First church, at the time of its organization, was 145.

Later the St. Mary's Avenue Congregational church was secured for a Sunday afternoon and a Thursday evening meeting.

beginning and among its earlier acts was the adoption of a schedule for benevolent collections. At its first regular annual business meeting, January, 1887, Dr. E. Womersley, J. L. Worley and J. E. Richardson were chosen deacons and J. H. Dumont, chairman of the present building committee, presented the report of a similar committee on that occasion.

Mr. House's pastorate continued until March 31, 1891. The church membership

The New Germany of the Twentieth Century

(Copyright, 1904, by Frank G. Carpenter.) LUDWIG, Oct. 22.—(Correspondence.) "More than almost any other country," was the reply. "The movement for workmen's insurance began with Emperor Wilhelm I. He proposed it in a message in 1881, and the sentiment in favor of it has grown since then that we have a regular system of insurance under the control of the government, by which every German workman receives financial assistance in case of accident, sickness and invalidity or old age. More than \$300,000 is daily spent in this way upon the protection of our workmen, and in a single year something like 5,000,000 persons receive help of one kind or another from this source. In the seventeen years from 1888 to 1901 50,000,000 people were so benefited. They received all told about \$1,500,000,000.

workingmen" also, is pensioned. There are now more than 13,000,000 persons insured as to invalidity. "In addition to this the insurance fund has accumulated a reserve capital of about \$75,000,000, which is being used for the general benefit of the workmen. Through it we are constructing workmen's dwellings, hospitals, homes for traveling men, public baths, systems of waterworks and other sanitary improvements. Indeed, it seems to me that our system of workmen's insurance is excellent.

The Kaiser's Friend. "The profits of these expositions are not only commercial," continued Dr. Lewald, "they are political and social as well. That fair at Paris did much to wipe out the hard feeling the French held as to the Germans. We made many friends there, and as a result the anti-German sentiment is dying out. Our exhibit here at St. Louis is largely a matter of international friendship. The emperor and his people look upon the United States as their friend, and we want to take part in any international affair of this nature fashioned by you. At the present time the United States is much looked up to in Germany and American goods are very popular. Indeed, they are quite the mode.

It is not Germany overcrowded? "I do not think so," said the Imperial German commissioner. "We have a large population in proportion to our area, but so far we have plenty of room. We have now almost 50,000,000 people. This is 20,000,000 less than the United States, and we are increasing at the rate of 2,000,000 or 3,000,000 a year."

America a German Nation. "How about your emigration? Is it as great as in the past?" "No; business is now good, and everyone has plenty to do. Our emigrants increase during hard times and fall off when times are good. So far you have had the bulk of the Germans who have gone abroad. It is estimated that 5,000,000 of our people have come here since 1820, and that now one-sixth of all your population have German blood in their veins."

Rev. A. W. Lamar, from South Carolina, was the next pastor, serving from 1857 to 1861. Large congregations and encouraging church growth marked this period. The building at this time was repaired at a cost of \$5,000, and membership increased from 125 to 261.

In 1822 Rev. W. F. Helling was pastor and continued until 1826. This was a period of important changes, and in December, 1824, the building at the corner of Davenport and Fifteenth street, which had long been the center of the life and activities of the church, burned. After worshipping a year in the Young Men's Christian association building a new site was secured at Thirty-fifth and Farnam streets and a temporary building was provided. After continuing work at the location for about a year Dr. Helling resigned and was succeeded by Rev. T. L. Kettner, who served till September 1, 1838. Shortly afterward measures were taken which led to the union of this church with the Beth Eden Baptist church. This union will be referred to more fully further on.

New Branches Spread Out. It is now necessary to go back and note the beginnings of other interests growing out of the First church. There are at present three colored Baptist churches, two Swedish churches, one German church and six English speaking churches in Omaha and South Omaha, all directly or indirectly connected with the old First church. Also a number of members were dismissed to assist in forming a church in Council Bluffs. In 1827 this work of going out began when the Tabernacle church was organized. But it became apparent that there was not at that time a demand for another Baptist church and soon this body disbanded and went back to the First church. But as Omaha grew it, in time, became evident that new Baptist churches must be organized.

American and German Workmen. The first part of my talk with Dr. Lewald was devoted to the American workmen in comparison with the German. Dr. Lewald had to use the American laborer to put up his great buildings and to arrange his exhibits. He don't think much of him. Said he: "I can't understand how the United States can hold its own in the markets of the world if the labor conditions of St. Louis are typical of those of the rest of the country. We have had a terrible time here whenever we have had to employ American workmen. We need them in erecting our buildings and the wages were outrageous. We have paid \$1 an hour to common mechanics who in Germany would be considered second class workmen. They would work only eight hours per day, and if we found fault with their work or asked them to remedy any defects in it they would throw up the job and leave. They seemed to have no desire to please us, and their sole object was to put in the time and get the money. One of our German mechanics who came over with us, thought the conditions outrageous. I don't know that similar ones prevail throughout the United States, but if they do they cannot be worth your industrial injury. What is your situation as to labor matters, Dr. Lewald?" "We have our troubles, too, but we are far better off than you are. Our people are more willing to give a fair day's work for a fair day's wage and they are yearly becoming more skillful through our technical schools, which are now to be found in every industrial center."



What does our trade with you amount to? "In 1902 it was about \$200,000,000, of which more than \$20,000,000 was made up of our purchases from you and a little over \$12,000,000 of what you bought from us. We buy more than twice as much from the United States as we sell to it. We buy more from it than from any other nation, and next to Great Britain we are your best customer. It must be remembered, however, that much of our purchases consist of food and raw material, and that we sell you chiefly manufactured articles."

The American Shoe in Germany. "How about the American shoe?" I asked. "That is an anomaly which our people cannot understand. They say there is no reason why shoes made here should be sold in such quantities in Germany. We have the same leather that you have. We import our machinery and our workmen are better than yours. Nevertheless, your shoes continue to compete with ours in our home markets. I can only explain it by the fact that you make shoes in such large quantities that they may be able to make them cheaper."

German Commissioner General at the St. Louis World's Fair.

The interior wood work and furniture are of quarter sawed white oak, with a rich old English finish. The heating is direct steam and very special attention has been given to a thorough system of ventilation. The organ, built by the Austin Organ company of Hartford, Conn., is an instrument of great range and power. It is really five organs in one. Great organ, swell organ, orchestral organ, pedal organ and solo or "echo" organ. The entire cost of the building and furnishings, including the organ, was about \$51,000, making the cost of the entire property \$61,000.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.