

Present Prosperity and Past Struggles of an Omaha Congregation

LAST Sunday the cornerstone of the new South Tenth Street Methodist church was laid. Twelve pastors, some of them from other cities, took part in the service, which was under the auspices of the Methodist Social union, and the Nebraska grand lodge, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, under the direction of Grand Master Melville R. Hopewell of Tekamah, and the impressive ceremonies designated by the Masonic ritual. Governor John H. Mickey, Congressman John L. Kennedy and Rev. George W. Iaham delivered appropriate addresses. Such was the interest of the public in the event, that the newly laid floor was not half large enough to hold the people, and hundreds of them watched the ceremonies from the sidewalks.

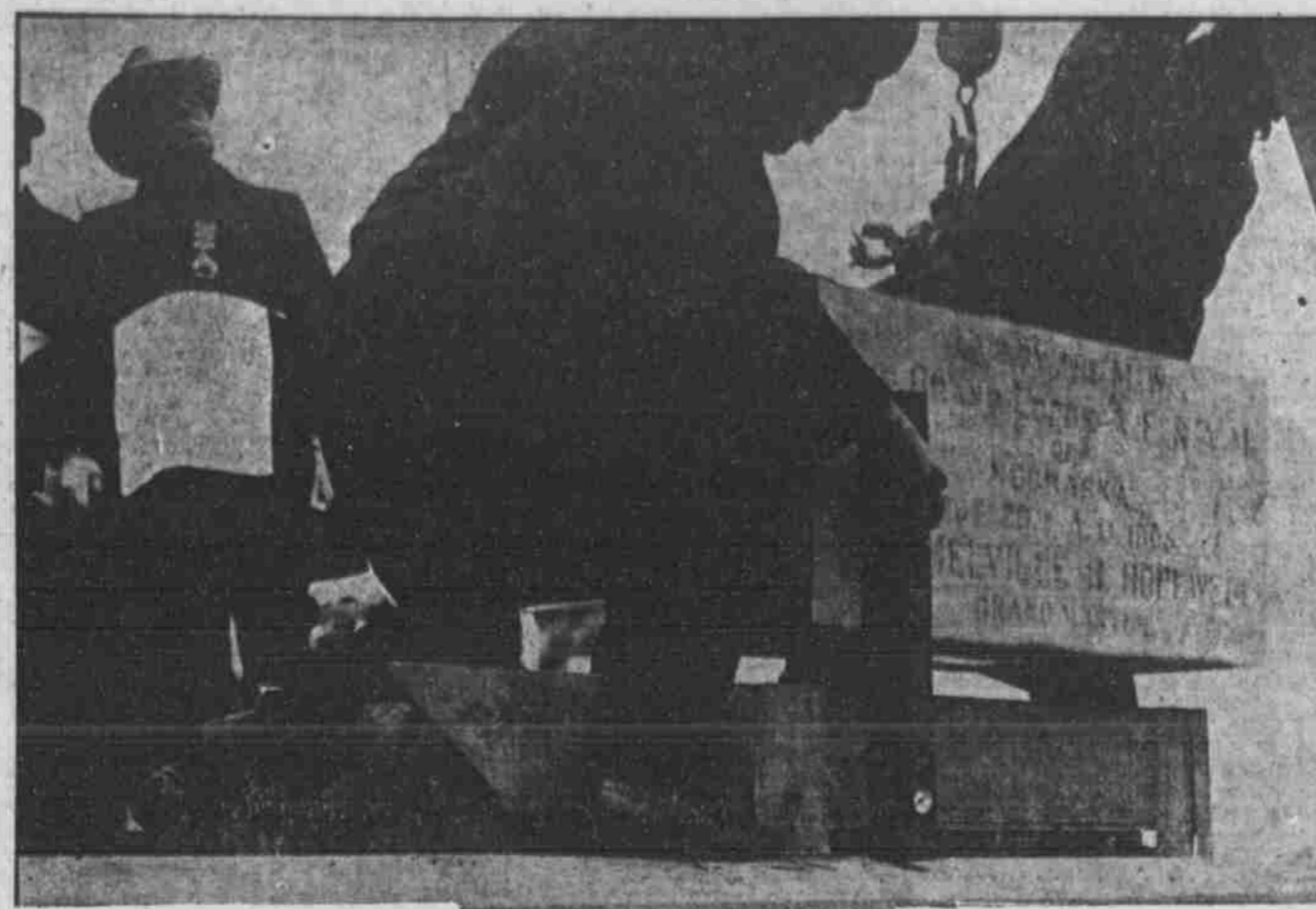
It was a great day in the history of the church, one for which the members had been praying for six years. The old home was twenty-five years old and in a very dilapidated condition. As early as the pastorate of Rev. Owen Larison, who

It is probable that a bishop will be present, and also the national secretary of the Epworth league. The dedication services will require two Sundays.

The building committee which has charge of the erection of the new church is composed of Rev. D. W. McGregor, E. L. Cain, A. E. Walkup and Dr. Seymour Smith. Members of the Board of Trustees are A. S. Gaymann, president; E. L. Cain, treasurer; A. E. Walkup, secretary; A. H. Windle, Archie Tompfe, L. H. Jones, H. E. Hildebrand, David Cole and Dr. Seymour Smith.

History of the Church.

It was in the spring of 1872 that a mission was formed at Tenth and Pierce streets, with Joseph M. Adair in charge. The city had spread out southward beyond the Union Pacific crossing on Tenth street and the people in the new part of town found the distance too great to the first church at Seventeenth and Dodge streets. Mr. Adair's field was not only the south part of the city, but a circuit which included



PUTTING THE CORNERSTONE INTO ITS PERMANENT RESTING PLACE.

condition that the membership would agree to pay one-fourth the indebtedness on the property every three months for a year, and promised that if they succeeded in canceling the debt at the rate mentioned in the condition, they should have his services free for a year. The debt was removed from property in twelve months.

Mr. Rowe was reappointed the following year. He called the officers of the church together to plan the year's work. He told them if they would guarantee him a salary of \$500 he would lay it aside to be used in the erection of a new church. The salary was given, and Mr. Rowe put it away as a nest egg for the building fund.

Rev. P. C. Johnson, who had been stationed at the Eighteenth Street church, was appointed to the charge in 1878. He keenly felt the humiliation of being transferred to the humble church, and he was without ambition to try to do very much. The question of building was often talked over, but the courage of the church was not of such measure as to lead to any decisive action, though the \$20 of Mr. Roe's de-



KNIGHTS TEMPLAR IN LINE AT THE DEDICATION.



PART OF THE CROWD THAT WITNESSED THE CEREMONY.

came to the church in 1899 and left in 1900, the need was strongly felt for a new church building. At this time there was considerable talk of erecting a church, but the debt was so large already that no action was taken.

Difficulties in the Way.

Rev. A. L. Mickel was the successor of Mr. Larison, and it was his idea that the conference sent him to Omaha with the idea that he would bend his efforts toward the building of a church. All of his work and that of the building committee to this end is not generally known to the public. The debt on the church was still such that the pastor considered as almost impossible the erection of a building which the growth of the church demanded. If ordinary methods of securing subscriptions were to be used, the idea was conceived of making the edifice a memorial to some prominent citizen, provided the heirs of the dead man would furnish the building committee with about half the necessary funds. Mr. Mickel visited the sons of a well known man who had recently died, and they offered to give \$5,000 on a church, which would cost \$15,000, and which was to be named in memory of their father. This decision was discussed at length by the board, which finally arrived at the conclusion that the remaining \$10,000 could not be raised, and rejected the offer. Mr. Mickel then gave up all thought of building and began to collect money to repair the old structure. He secured \$2,000, and when he left in October of 1904 this amount was given into the hands of the present pastor, Rev. D. W. McGregor.

several points outside. In his diary he mentioned Omaha, Florence, Papillon, Iron Bluffs, Richards, Bird's school house and Pickens as places where preaching was held.

The missionary traveled from neighborhood to neighborhood and preached the gospel. His dependence for food and raiment for himself and family was upon a few scattered church members and friends who were engaged in making houses for themselves. His receipts were small and his meager support was augmented by presents of food, clothing and other articles. There was not a church building in the field when Mr. Adair assumed charge of the work, except the one at Florence, and the places for holding services were primitive and in the winter uncomfortable. In the last year of his work, 1874, Mr. Adair raised money to apply on the debt on the church and lot on Tenth street. The building on the lot was small, but it served as a place in which to preach and conduct a Sunday school.

"About the time of the autumnal equinox in 1875," says Rev. James Haynes, who wrote "A History of Methodism in Omaha," "the Rev. and voluble T. H. Tibbles was given charge of the little church in which worshipped a small membership of poor people. The other appointments were adjusted to other charges or abandoned, among the latter Florence. Before the close of the next spring Mr. Tibbles secured a promise from Bishop



GOVERNOR MICKEL READING THE ADDRESS.

Andrews, whose episcopal home at that date was at Des Moines, Ia., to come to Omaha and dedicate the house. The bishop came and preached, but refused to utter the dedicatory formula, saying the people should build better before giving a house to God's service.

"Mr. Tibbles was a stenographer and newspaper reporter, and rather than depend upon the membership to provide a salary, he gave more time to writing, for which he was in a small way compensated. The charge, hence, did not prosper in his care, but he added to its indebtedness by having a parsonage built on the south side of the meeting-house at a cost of about \$800, most of which

was provided for, but the remainder was added and put down as debt, and the property was mortgaged to secure it."

The next two years the church had no pastor, and the pulpit was supplied by pastors from other churches. The opinion was general that the charge was not deserving the services of a preacher, and probably it would have been dropped from the list of appointments if it had not been for the advice of John Phillips Roe, a supernumerary of the Wisconsin conference, who lived in the south part of the city. The mission was placed in Mr. Roe's hands by the president of the conference. He took charge on

condition that the membership would agree to pay one-fourth the indebtedness on the property every three months for a year, and promised that if they succeeded in canceling the debt at the rate mentioned in the condition, they should have his services free for a year. The debt was removed from property in twelve months.

Rev. David Marquette, who came to the church in 1879, was the indefatigable worker who was responsible for the erection of the church. The little mission church and the parsonage built by Mr. Tibbles was on the corner directly east of the present church. Mr. Marquette, when he found sufficient encouragement in his efforts at gathering subscriptions, bought the present location of the church at a cost of \$1,200. Twelve months after the old property was sold and Mr. Marquette began the building of a new house of worship. To carry out his plans the persistent preacher kept at his canvass until he had gone over the largest part of the city, applying personally to business men, clerks, and others. The house was completed in the third year of Mr. Marquette's pastorate and was formally dedicated by Bishop John F. Hurst, July 30, 1881. With the subscriptions, the money from the sale of the old property and the reserve fund left by Mr. Roe, the church was able to start in its new home with a large proportion of its debt paid.

It was a day of thanksgiving, but the gladness was marred by one thing. On his bed in the city of Washington by President Garfield with a bullet hole through his body. He had been shot eight days before by the assassin Guitau. Before the dedication a prayer for his recovery was pronounced by Rev. John B. Maxwell.

In the fall of 1883 Rev. J. W. Stewart was transferred from the First church to the

Some Interesting Incidents.

People used to wonder why the windows were one color in one side of the church and another on the opposite side. It was in the summer of 1890 that the hallsterns came which broke thousands of windows in the city. The full force of the storm struck one side of the church and beat out all the windows there, while the windows on the other side were unharmed. No glass to match the windows could be secured and glass of another color had to be taken. The two sorts of glass were still in the church when it was torn down.

When Rev. J. B. Priest, now pastor of the Seward Street Methodist church, becomes reminiscence, he tells of the time the floor fell. It was on the evening of Easter in 1896, and the congregation had gathered for services. Mr. Priest had just begun to pray when he heard a terrific crash. He looked out from the pulpit to see the floor sinking and to hear the congregation screaming and yelling. A large timber had given way and let the floor drop two feet. No one was injured, but one woman was so frightened that she had hysterical almost all night. Mr. Priest remembers distinctly that the services were not resumed that evening.

Revolution Which Established the Isthmian Republic

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WASHINGTON, Nov. 2.—(Special Correspondence of The Bee.)—Did Uncle Sam foment the revolution by which Panama broke away from its mother country, Colombia, and make it possible for us to buy the isthmian canal? The truthful answer to this question will never be given. It is known only to the leading officials of Panama and the United States, and they will not tell. I heard a number of stories last spring during my stay on the isthmus, which show how Panama attempted to get the assistance of the United States and some which indicate that she succeeded. Whether the stories are true to the letter or not, they are certainly interesting. They came to me from men entitled to credence, but as I am not permitted to mention their names they must be taken for what they are worth.

President Amador Visits Washington.

The first story is as to how Dr. Amador, now president of the Panama republic, received the assurance that Uncle Sam would come to the aid of Panama if it declared its independence. The incident occurred shortly after Colombia had refused to ratify the sale of the canal by the French to the United States for \$40,000,000. Panama feared that this refusal would cause our congress to adopt Nicaragua as the place for its transisthmian waterway. Its leading officials saw the necessity for quick action. They decided to break away from Colombia if they could get the support of the United States, and Dr. Amador was chosen to go to Washington and sound the authorities. He came and called upon the secretary of war, but could get no satisfaction. Secretary Taft manifested an interest in his proposition, but he was noncommittal. He said:

"There is yet no breach of friendship between the United States and Colombia, and we can do nothing now." This was so decisive that Dr. Amador looked upon all as lost and started back to Panama. On his way home, however, he called upon Mr. Lindo of Mesa, Nephews & Co., in New York, and was there advised to wait over a steamer to confer with Mr. Bunau-Varilla of the French canal company as to the situation. He did so and at the conference Mr. Varilla, so the story goes, told him that he would agree that if the new republic would make him, Varilla, its first minister to the United States, he would see that the deal went through. To this Dr. Amador agreed, and Bunau-Varilla started for Washington. It is alleged he had a private talk there with President Roosevelt and that our president, while not making any positive promises, gave such indications that Bunau-Varilla concluded the

communication directly with the officials at Washington. One cable translated from the code read:

"Where are American battleships?"

The reply came back in another code word which meant, "Will be in Panama within four days." This cable was sent through Bunau-Varilla, and, sure enough, four days later the first vessel arrived. The day following its arrival the Panama independence was declared.

A Narrow Escape.

In the meantime the Colombian government had received an inkling of the proposed revolution. This came, so it is believed, through the bishop of Panama, who made a journey to Cartagena about that time. It was at once decided to nip the plot in the bud by appointing new officials. Troops were ordered to Panama and the officers sent with them had instructions to execute Messrs. Amador, Obispo, Gomez, Fedorico Boyd, Augustin Arango and others. This was duly reported at Colon in advance of the arrival of troops, so these men knew that if Panama did not become independent they would lose their army with General Huertas at its head, and were ready to act at the time the troops came. The Colombian soldiers numbered 60 men, three generals and six colonels, but it was only the officers who came to Panama on the first train, leaving the soldiers to follow.

How the Panama Railroad Helped.

The fact that the Colombian troops did not get to Panama was largely due to Colonel Shaler, the superintendent of the Panama railroad. Colonel Shaler knew that the Panamanians intended to rebel, but this railroad company was indebted to Colombia for its franchise, and he had to nominally support the Colombian government or the charter might be annulled. Colonel Shaler was at the same time a good American citizen, and as such wanted Panama to succeed and Uncle Sam to get the canal. The situation required diplomacy and shrewdness, and Colonel Shaler rose to meet it. He evidently knew that our gunboats were at the same time a good American citizen, and as such wanted Panama to succeed and Uncle Sam to get the canal. The situation required diplomacy and shrewdness, and Colonel Shaler rose to meet it. He evidently knew that our gunboats were

Our Marines to the Front.

Our gunboat, the Nashville, was at this time in the harbor, and its commander, W. M. Hunter, had been notified by Colonel Shaler that there was likely to be trouble. He had told Captain Hunter that if the American flag should be raised upon his house, it would be a signal for the marines to come to his support. When the soldiers threatened to fire upon the Americans, Colonel Shaler hoisted his flag and went to the docks. He had hardly reached there before Captain Hunter landed with a company of thirty-eight marines. Colonel Shaler told his story, watching Captain Hunter anxiously, to see how he would take it. If he should refuse to assume the responsibility Shaler realized that it was all up with Panama, for the troops could not be held back longer. As he concluded Captain Hunter said:

"Well, colonel, the only thing I see to do is to fortify the freight depot. You get what men you can, and with them and the marines I think we can prevent the cars from going." This was done. The marines took the station and piled up the cotton bales lying there in front of them. Colonel Shaler ordered his men from the railroad shops and in a short time there were sixty more American marines. In the meantime the battle of diplomacy was going on. The officers had already been arrested and word was sent from Panama that the troops might come if they wished. This was in the evening and Colonel Shaler, on the ground that he dared not risk his cars and men carrying the soldiers across the isthmus until morning. They stormed, but waited. In the meantime the lights of a second and a third American gunboat appeared in the harbor of Colon and with them more American marines. The Colombian troops then saw that the game was up. They decided to submit, especially as they were promised by the revolutionists \$5,000 in gold if they did so. They took the money and sailed back to Colombia.

Where Bribe Money Came From.

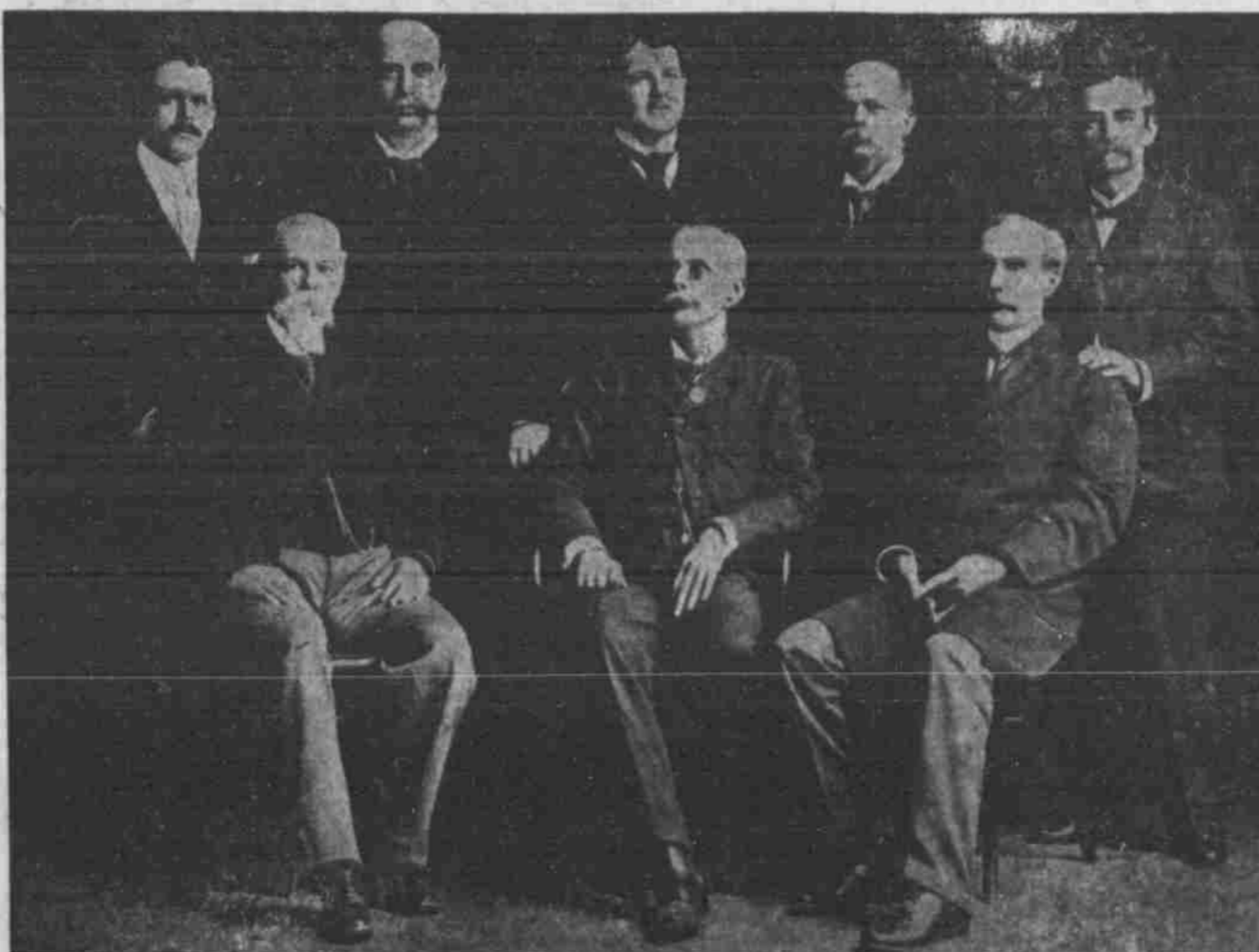
The story of the bribe money is also interesting. It was furnished by Colonel Shaler, but not directly, for it had been, follow on a special train an hour later.

McGregor Tackles the Job.

It required two years for Rev. D. W. McGregor to familiarize himself with conditions and to get the subscription fund far enough under way to justify the new building. Mr. McGregor went to the men who had offered Mr. Mickel \$5,000, thinking to get that amount from them, and feeling sure that the remainder of the \$15,000 could be raised without any trouble. He had just finished building a parsonage at Bloomfield, and he had every confidence in himself as a money-getter. But the sons of the man for whom the church was to be named had changed their minds about the donation. They would give \$1,000, but would not give \$5,000, and did not care about having the church named in memory of their father. This was a great disappointment, but what was lost in this instance by procrastination was made up by determined labor on the part of Mr. McGregor. Last summer the board of trustees decided that the fund was large enough to warrant the building, and the old church was torn down for the erection of a new one this fall. All summer and fall services have been held in a tabernacle erected temporarily for the purpose.

Style of the New Church.

The new church, according to contract, will cost \$125,000. It will be of manufactured stone blocks, with stone trimmings, in dimensions it is 23x30 feet. The seating capacity of the auditorium will be 600, but when the Epworth league room and the women's parlor are thrown open into the auditorium the entire seating capacity will be 800. The pastor's study Mr. McGregor regards as a gem. All the rooms on this floor are to be finished in oak. In the basement will be class rooms for the accommodation of 200 Sunday school children. The windows are of a very fine design and were purchased from a local firm, the building committee believing in the patronage of home industry.



Frederick Boyd Moorhead, Armas Nicanor de Olanis, Jose Augustin Arango, Dr. Amador, Manuel Espinosa, Carlos Constantino, Ariles Remon, Thomas Ariles. BOARD OF REVOLUTIONISTS WHO LED THE INDEPENDENCE OF PANAMA.

It is expected that the church will be completed about February 1 and tentative plans are now being made for the dedication.

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