

**Article 4, copied from The Newark Courier, Thursday, January 24, 1924 edition
Methodists Will Celebrate Dedication of New Church During Week of Jan. 27th to Feb. 3rd**

Interesting History of M. E. Sunday School is Told in Old Paper Prepared at Centennial

Complete Story of the School Written by Mrs. R. H. Palmer. Quaint Description of Old Sunday School Meetings Related in Blank Verse

(Editor's note: The following beautiful historical article was written by Mrs. R. H. Palmer on the occasion of the centennial and semi-centennial celebration of the Methodist Episcopal church in this village. It was written in blank verse; but for mechanical reasons we have set it in prose style. At the end of the article, Mrs. Palmer has brought the history down to the present time.)

Let us in fancy turn our steps t'ward the old church home of eighteen fifty-two. 'Tis sabbath morn; and from the old church tower rings out upon the wintry air the tuneful call to worship. To worship with the noble band of pioneers who organized the church, and, with their children formed the Sunday school whose record reaches back of all the Sunday schools in Newark's early days. With reverence and thanksgiving, we pass the sacred portals, and find on either hand a large box stove whose warm pipe measures the length of either side of the room, finding an outlet in a chimney at the rear. The crackling fire of wood sends out its warmth, inviting us to pause a moment as we pass, chilled by the frosty air.

Soon, we give place to others, who are entering, and make our way down the narrow aisle, and naked floor, guiltless of tapestry, entering the high back pew, soap stone in hand, the small door closed, and buttoned and we are ready for the service. Before us in the pulpit high, between the entrance doors, the pastor stands, hymn book in hand, with dignity and reverence, he reads the hymn:

“Lord of the worlds above,
How pleasant, and how fair
The dwellings of thy love,
Thine earthly temple are.”

THE CHOIR MASTER

Meanwhile the choir master from his buckwheat notes a tune selects, to fit the hymn, and now we hear the do-me-sol; which gives the key and rising with the people we turn ourselves around and face the chorus choir in numbers round and full and Pinkham Crummett in their midst as leader. Tall and serene he stands an honest type of the old school of pioneers and real founder of our Sunday school.

We listen, while the sacred strains of praise ascend form heart and soul sincere in words distinct and clear. No need was there of organ tunes in those old days. The sermon follows in a plain ungarnished exposition of the truth – with warmth and tenderness applied.

The long side gallery on the south with its three tiers of seats is filled with maidens in the rosy bloom of youth, and fair young girls, while on the north, young men and boys appear, facing the south, and if their eyes behold the scene which each revolving Sabbath brings to them, who can speak words of blame ungenerously? Surely, the maidens never cast a glance before them to the other side, but turn their eyes toward the east, where they behold the preacher, and strict attention give to all his words. And now the service ends and all these youngsters, with their elders meet below, for Sunday school preserving still the rule – “ye men both young and old, the north side take and all ye womenkind, the south. Make no mistake.” The superintendent Ruel Taylor takes his place – the builder of this

present edifice. An old familiar hymn is sung and then the school entire are on their knees in prayer, unseen behind the high back seats. The superintendent now the lesson reads which is usually found in Matthew, Mark, in Luke or John, and when another hymn is sung the teachers listen to each pupil in the class, while verses from the holy book recited are, a score, or two, or three, by each are stored in memory. There are no lesson helps – each teacher in his way expounds the text and application makes. The superintendent then reviews the same. Now from the small red case beneath the gallery in the rear some books are taken, and distributed; another hymn is sung, and we're dismissed and take our way from out one of the many sessions well remembered in the old white church.

THE NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOM OF 1855

Time flies apace, and in 1855 we find ourselves worshipping in the Sunday school room of our new church; the present edifice. Since our last date we have held our farewell service in the deal old church with all its hallowed scenes and associations, when with mingled feelings of sadness and joy, we sang in our hearts, sweet peans over her past history.

“Farewell, farewell to the Old!
Beneath the arches, and one by one,
From sun to shade, and from shade to sun
We pass, and the years are told.
Farewell, farewell to the Old!”

We have witnessed the laying of the corner stone of our new church edifice with very elaborate services. We have witnessed the walls, the spire as they climbed the air, and have watched with anxious eyes to see the completion of our Sunday school room which we are now enjoying with grateful appreciation and pride.

“All hail! All hail to the New!
The future lies like a world new born,
All steeped in sunshine and mists of morn,
And arched with a cloudless blue,
All hail, all hail to the New!”

Through the prayers, the sacrifices and the toils of our fathers in Israel we are the inheritors of this new place of worship, this new Sunday school room. Our audience room will not be ready for dedication in many months. G. S. Gorsline is now our superintendent. A Sunday school exhibition is to be given similar to the exhibitions which were in vogue in all the day schools at that time for money must be secured to purchase more Sunday school books. The program, consisting of dialogues, orations, colloquies, compositions, and choir singing, is under the direction of the superintendent, who has written a dialogue for the occasion upon the subject of Spiritual Rappings which had its origin three years previous to this time in the Hyde house at Hydesville. The dialogue opens with an animated discussion by a class of young ladies concerning the origin and sensational rumors of this strange phenomenon. Seating themselves around a stand, and placing their hands upon it, they waited for the coming of the spirit and soon the rappings began and it was found that the Hyde house was not the only place where such an entertainment could be given.

The following summer our Sunday school held a celebration in Mr. Byrant's woods, a mile north west of the village. Picnics were not heard of at that time for Sunday schools. A “celebration” was the only thing in order and could not be held without an address from some celebrated speaker or a literary program and the service of a large choir. There must be some marching to marshall music, with silk banners lettered in gilt and streamers floating to the breeze. Upon this occasion each member of the school was provided with a badge of blue ribbon upon which was inscribed the words “Joyful be our

members,” which was a quotation from the chorus of one of the songs which was sung.

This proved to be an enjoyable occasion. Every member of the church would have considered it a great affliction to be absent. The literary program was given by eight young ladies and gentlemen, and consisted of original papers and oration interspersed with music by the large chorus choir which made the welkin ring and the trees of the forest reverberate with songs of praise. A large platform had been erected for those who gave the program, and the completion of which the people gathered in large numbers for “a feast of reason and flow of soul,” showing fine appreciation for the delicious and bountiful menu which was accompanied throughout with strains of marshall music. After which a social hour was enjoyed.

AFFECTED BY CIVIL WAR

During the early sixties, our church and Sunday school were under the depressing influences of the civil war. A call had been made for volunteers, three hundred thousand more, and large mass meetings were being held all over the country, Sunday afternoons were not considered too sacred, for so sacred a cause. One of these meetings had already been held upon the Methodist church lawn, attended by pastors and people; and now the people are gathering for another of these war meetings and religious and patriotic hymns are being sung between the intervals of silent waiting for the speakers, who are to be our own townsmen, one of them our own brave Wilson, a young lawyer from our Sunday school who is mustering volunteers to form a company. But, a stranger is approaching upon whom all eyes are turned. Tall and erect, in army blue with the insignia of captain; one arm in a sling and his face pale from suffering. The question “Whom can he be” was answered over and over during the days, months and years which followed, as we in our church and Sunday school and in our community, realized his value on religious, patriotic, and educational lines.

How we revere today the memory of Prof. J. Dorman Steele, the prolific author and traveler. Responding to an invitation to give a brief address, he arose and calmly surveyed the assembled multitude of strangers before him. A hush of anxious expectancy fell on the assembly. The impressive personality with the recent wounds received in battle gave eagerness to the silent attention. “Opportunity and effort belong to men, results belong to God.” At the conclusion of this enthusiastic meeting the fire of patriotism, was burning its way into the hearts of many of our noble young men. The last day of this week had come, a sad apprehensive week in many homes, where the war fever raged among the sons and fathers; and on the evening of this restless day, when sad foreboding shadowed many hearts, a great assembly formed upon the public square, where the four corners meet, and waited patiently for those, upon whose hearts the great responsibility of this important gathering lay.

EARLY WAR SCENES

They come at last our loyal citizens the speakers of the hour; they come to inspire, promote and guide; to infuse into the hearts of men, new love for country in her time of need, and as they mount the spacious stage in numbers large, to stirring strains of martial music, we see again the members of our Sunday school. What interests hang upon this hour; what history shall the coming days unfold to many hearts and homes. The darkest shades of night rest on the scene with only here and there a glimmering star. The torches that surround the stage, cast their uncertain ghastly light upon the earnest faces of these men. Another and another speak, they call for volunteers, the patriotic fires begin to glow and burn the names of volunteers are announced from time to time, the speakers pausing while the cheers, the welkir rings. Burnham and Briggs, and S. K. Williams speak, and now the torch light shows the face and form of our Professor, Dorman Steele, as now we

know him, by nature and by grace lover of books, of home, of man, and lover too of peace; yet now, the advocate of war. He speaks and in his words there gleams the fire from his own loyal heart which kindles the self-sacrificing flame in other hearts, he stimulates true patriotism, and to the hesitating points the duty of the hour. Under his ardor and the urgency of his appeal, many spring forward, giving their names defenders of the Union, and as the speaker pauses we hear announced name after name to the excited multitude each name announced inspires others until the heavens reverberate with the shouts that rise from the assembly and mingling with these are groans and tears if widows, mothers and of wives who standing under shelter of the awnings round the square behold! And hear! Some with composure, spartan like, and others, who, like clinging vines, feel suddenly the prop give way. Yet still the work goes on; and not until the midnight hour, does the enlisting and the shoutings cease. A few sad days of careful preparations and of parting pass and the young women in our Sunday school call frequent meetings where with busy fingers they scrape the lint from linen, with which to bind up the wounds, they make the pin rolls, and the pocket cases filled with needles, thimbles, thread with scissors, buttons and these words "God bless, protect and keep you, and when the war is o'er, return you safely home." These simple gifts were sent to brothers, lovers, friends.

THE BOYS IN BLUE

Eight leading workers from our Sunday school and choir entered the ranks of "boys in blue," defenders of their country; all from the oldest families of our church, save one. Two were fine teachers of our Bible classes; one, our librarian; and one, the leader of our sacred songs. The others sang in sweetest strains of tenor and of bass. These men were: Captain Andrew Wilson, Dr. Alpheus Crosby, E. B. S. Landon, L. C. White, George L. Runyon, W. S. Drake, Lewis H. Aldrich,

Emory L. Taylor. Many others from our church and congregation also responded to the call for volunteers.

A year or more has passed, and one by one they bring the bodies of our fallen heroes home. A common gloom and sorrow rests upon the town. Lines of denomination of creed as well, sink in oblivion: To every church and Sunday school the dead return while many rest beneath the southern soil. Churches are draped and union service held; this touch of sorrow maketh all men kin. Another year has passed and in our Sunday school and church a religious awakening is experienced under the efforts of our pastor, O. L. Gibson, and simultaneously in our union school a revival breaks out, under the influence and Christly life of Prof. Steele. So deep was the love of these pupils for their teacher, that they turned to him as to a father. The interest was so great that he was asked by his pupils to remain after school for a prayer meeting which he did.

A GREAT REVIVAL

That evening at the first invitation from our pastor twenty young men mostly from our Sunday school arose and surrounded the altar. The work increased until it became the one subject of conversation. Groups of young people were seen here and there upon the street corners in earnest conversations. The very air seemed permeated with the divine presence. At the close of the revival meetings, the converts were asked to come to the front and a line was formed reaching the width of the church in front of the altar and down the side aisles, nearly to the front entrance doors. A large addition was made to our Sunday school of active workers.

Thus far our history has been gleaned from memory's page – no records mark and dates and happenings of those ... precious to the few who remain.

We now to our first records turn whereon we find the names and dates which make our history

until the present time; the filling must be sandwiched in from memory and of rich experience, which, resounding through the corridors of time comes to us freighted still with the old time zest of kindling eye and beaming face and the enthusiasm in rehearsal which marked the scenes and joys of bygone days and proves the power of memory to perpetuate the pleasures had in youth to ripe old age. Our date is sixty-five; our Sunday school is superintended by a man whom all declare was born to fill the place, J. W. Benton is the man. For one decade under his guiding hand the plastic mind of youth was molded

Alternating with these the well-remembered social of the Ladies' Aid. These weekly meetings brought together old and young in numbers large; a happy family – in sympathetic touch, in heart and interest one. The question Who is this? Or What is that? Was never asked; for all knew all; and all were young together. Throughout this epoch the strength and wisdom of the church was in the Sunday school, a feature of much pride and interest to all. An east thing it was to carry undertakings to successful issue. Our leader Mr. Benton in his prime and at the acme of his popularity and powers; a very prince among his compeers led on the youthful host to standards of high excellence and worth. Again, we hear his voice in ringing tones as in the olden time when, standing in his wonted dignity before the school, with sparkling eye, under light and warmth of some great truth he sought, with warning, and with invitation to raise the standard high. As showers from the clouds in summer swell the streams till they go tumbling headlong o'er their rocky bed, sparkling in sun kissed spray and whirling eddies, and carrying in their torrent force, the driftwood, which perchance, as ledged and rested lazily, through summer's heat and winter's snow since winds in frolic hurled it from its mooring, so, ever and anon, when heart and soul were swelling under the impressive teachings of the hour, he sent forth words in torrents, words that sparkled in

the light and warmth of holy fires within until the school electrified, sat awed and humbled; and the scattering driftwood sat with bated breath, and, restless left their moorings and joined the active workers in the field. These words so often heard still ring in memory. "Boys! What are you doing to be men! Take on the strength and glory of Christian manliness! Take it on now before your locks are silvered and the furrows mark your brows with age, and life for you is brief and no strong days are left for you to better make the world by living. Take on this glory now; how it will exalt your youth and your manhood! Take it now and then, embrace the wondrous possibilities which it brings to you. And girls, God bless you! Accept these truths, bind the upon your hearts. Wear them as chains about your necks how them will adorn your life, what luster give to your young womanhood. Oh, why are we not – why am I not a living exemplification of these terrible truths?"

In 1866 a new singing book had been introduced into the school and Prof. J. M. French, a noted Sunday school worker and singer of Rochester had been engaged to prepare a concert from this book to be given by the Sunday school the receipts of which were to be used in the purchase of a cabinet organ for the school.

THE CHOIR REHEARSALS

These rehearsals were attended with unusual interest and enthusiasm. The night of the concert came. A large stage had been erected over the pulpit platform, and as the school marched in from the Sunday school room and took their places upon the stage – Prof. French discovered to his utter consternation and discomforture, a full brass band in the rear of the church. Turning with blanched face to our superintendent he said – "My brother, what meaneth this? I cannot think of giving a vocal concert after that band has played an opening, and filled the church with its clarion notes; my work will all be lost, these voices cannot

compete with drums and horns." "Ah, pardon, but they can, my brother," – replied our superintendent undismayed, "there is nothing so sweet to captivate the heart as the human voice, go on my brother, go on."

And so the band played and the school sang with fine effect, and long before forgotten, and our professor's face shone brighter than all others.

Nothing was done by halves in those days. The thought was not how little can we do and yet go through, but how much may we do.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL PICNIC

And now, 'tis summer time and picnic fevers permeate the balmy air; the day is fixed; from far and near the prancing steeds appear. Seven four-horse teams bearing large wagons gaily decked and shaded with fresh bows and saplings of the sweet-scented evergreen; soon these are freighted round and round on either side with happy childhood. The older types of man and womanhood bring up the rear. The grand procession moves in close proximity. A solid mile of Sunday school is on its way to Clifton Springs under the clarion tones of marshalls, who, on either side arrayed, guard well the youngsters. A full brass band is in lead, alternates with the tuneful voices of the childing in sending forth sweet strains of melody as onward over hill and dale we move toward the famous city where is served a feast of royal dainties, fit for Kings; until the hungry brood is satisfied. Now a delightful ramble o'er the grounds and through the groves made beautiful by nature and by art; the children trying well the games and swings in gleeful sport and as the summer sun moves slowly down the west, we board the festive train, and take our journey home by way of Newark East, arriving at the home of Roderick Price, the long procession halts. The band strikes up a brilliant air, while two young ladies, by appointment for the purpose, place o'er the entrance gate an evergreen and floral arch bearing the motto "Honor to men who build colleges." The main

building of the Asylum on Asylum Hill was at that time a Baptist college which had recently been erected by Mr. Price; and at the instigation and under the direction of Mr. J. W. Benton this recognition and appreciation of a noble deed was given.

Among the favorite entertainments for admission given by the Sunday school previous to '75 were tableaux and music, poetical and historical, the poetical tableaux being illustrations of poems which were read. These entertainments were made very enjoyable.

THE SCHOOL IN 1874

In 1874 the membership of the school was 200. The lessons of the quarter were reviewed by teachers; they each having their subject given them the Sunday previous and the sessions closed with very interesting remark by way of application from the superintendent. These were interesting occasions and many visitors came in to hear the review and were always welcomed by the superintendent and school who invited them to come again. There was a large addition made to the Sunday school library at this time.

In the summer of 1876 our school joined with the Presbyterian school in a union picnic to Sodus Point at which time 500 pleasure seekers boarded the excursion train to enjoy the pleasures of the day. The following winter 20 of our Sunday school workers were converted and entered upon Christian life under the labors of Rev. Thurston from Syracuse. During this winter Mr. Benton traveled four weeks in the west upon his return gave a history of his visits to other Sunday schools which was very interesting and profitable.

A TRIP TO AURORA

Our fair morning in the summer of 1878 found our Sunday school boarding the steamer Jacob Anson, Jr., from Syracuse, which had been chartered for the day, and soon the sound of the

whistle was heard, the gang-plank raised and we were ploughing the waters of the Erie Canal on its winding way to Aurora; and though no "whales whistled" and no "porpoise rolled" and though no "dolphins bared their backs of gold" yet the mermaids – the beautiful murmuring maids whispered their songs, like the sirens of old until some of our youth were led willing captives by their enchanting strains; while those of mature years, and, settled in the even tenor of their ways sat tranquilly, and watched the clouds sail along the sky softly and tenderly, as holy memories go stealing o'er the vault of life. Thus while the youth found full enjoyment in each other the more conservative found food for thought and speech, in passing flower, in tree, in burst of song from country market man; in rural cottage, nestling in the vines, in flock and herd on hills with verdure clad. These themes made converse sweet, while gliding o'er the deep to fair Aurora where, the noon-day meal was spread and when the feast was over each took up march and wandered o'er the town until the shrill voiced whistle from the boat, recalled the scattered sheep and lambs, and sent them on their way toward home and native land a happy crew when lo the sound of distant mutterings from beyond the hills is heard, and great dark thunder clouds up rear their amber heads above the sharp clear line of the horizon; and soon the rain descends, sending the crowd below for shelter, save the few pairs, who beneath their umbrellas, much prefer the deck; rejoicing that the rain gave them due time to test the truth "Two are fine company while three a crowd becomes."

FROM 1879 TILL NOW

From 1879 until the present time our superintendents have been numerous; each holding the office from one to four years. The first to follow J. W. Benton was L. A. Loveland, man well fitted by nature, by grace and by scholarly attainments to follow such a leader. After four years of faithful and efficient service

Mr. Loveland retired from office to assume the duties of Bible class teacher, which office he has successfully filled until the present time. Mr. Benton followed with another term of four years as superintendent and then 1879 after a superintendency of 32 years he retired from office to become the loved and honored teacher of a large Bible class of young men which he held until prevented by illness which ended his life.

LIST OF SUPERINTENDENTS

Since 1879 the records show the names of the following persons as superintendents: Editor Jacob Wilson, S.B. VanDuser, C.A. Surdam, R.S. Welcher, Rev. J.C. Nichols, Rev. E.H King, W.H. VanBenschoten, E.E. Bird, Prof. Edgertonn Emor Ridley, T.B. Barnes, C.T. Lincoln. All of these men have filled the office successfully. During the years from '75 to '95 much attention was given to anniversary days. Elaborate programs were issued from our publishing houses for these days and our teachers and pupils entered heartily into preparation and rendering of these concert programs. These flourished like a green bay tree each in its turn. Christmas trees, chimneys, reindeer, Santa Claus, Triumphal Arches with an abundance of marching, songs and recitations. Easter and Children's Days were observed with appropriate and many times elaborate exercises. The Children's Day collections have in the main been sent to the educational fund, although Syracuse University has not been forgotten.

Also during this period, '75 to '95 our school was treated to many fine excursions and picnics. Twice we glided merrily over the blue bosom of the Lake at Canandaigua, twice did we drive dull cares away upon the waters of fair Keuka Lake as we passed up and down her shores, fanned by her breezes and charmed with her beautiful scenery. We visited many times the historic grounds at Sodus Point, we sailed over the sunlit waters of her beautiful bay, we pierced the created billows of Lake Ontario and dipped the splashing oar in her golden waters at sunset and

we did not scorn the groves that deck our own native plains nor the grand canal old Erie.

The Sunday school was not thoroughly organized into a missionary society until the year 1880 or during the pastorate of Rev. L.F. Congden, D.D., although regular missionary contributions had been received previous to that time. Through the organized society the contributions were greatly augmented. The following persons have served as presidents of the Sunday school missionary society: Mrs. Abbie Reed, S.B. VanDuser, Mrs. M.N. VanBenschoten, Mrs. Marl Hodgson, C.T. Lincoln, Mr. Monroe Buck. The plan of systematic giving was introduced into the classes about the year 1898 during the pastorate of Rev. H.C. Moyer. Since then our yearly contributions have steadily increased, \$130 being the total for this year. The first Sunday in each month being missionary day – a special missionary program arranged by the president of the society is rendered, the program not to exceed fifteen minutes. These programs are varied each month and are looked forward to with interest as they help to emphasize the missionary spirit. A few years ago the different classes in the school each furnished a missionary program during the year. This also proved to be a very interesting feature in the school.

In 1885 there were 110 volumes added to the Sunday school library. A picnic held in Mr. Benton's grove nearly 400 in attendance and a speaker from abroad. A large number of fresh air children were present as guests to this pleasant affair.

In 1887 a piano was purchased and placed in the Sunday school and the cabinet organ removed to the primary room. In 1890 the primary class was organized into a separate department with officers of its own. Its first superintendents for a brief period were Mrs. Emory Budd, second Mrs. Catherine Garlock, then following in longer terms; Mrs. S.B. VanDuser and Mrs. J.J. Smith the present superintendent. Their sessions are held

in an upper room which has recently been much enlarged and beautified and with the modern improvements of light and heat.

NEW CENTURY BEGINS

As now 'tis nineteen hundred and we stand between two centuries, a moment's space on which the whole round world must pause with bated breath and retrospective glance ere it takes up again its steady march through advancing cycles – already dawning with prophetic light. As we look back down the past o'er the few fleeting years which make the story of our life, how vividly can we recall the many persons and events which took conspicuous place in the fine moulding process of our lives and in the making of our history. How these dear names enrich fond memory's page. How faithfully their voices echo through the corridors of time. And they speak still, to those who live, their works do follow them. When we are gone and all earth's scenes are o'er will those who walked beside us on life's way through all its care and strife, its weal and woe, will they recall with gratitude and love, our Christly words and deeds, the sympathetic touch in times of need. And will the youth when thronged the path and grew to man's estate within the circle of our influence will they with thankfulness and love our bright example trace? We now must bid farewell to the old century with all thy family of little years. We hailed each birth and wrapped each infant year with swaddling clothes of finest texture of good resolve, in purest white, we decked each brow with rainbow promises and brilliant hue in deep sincerity but ere the bright young year had fairly grown to fit the wondrous swaddling clothes our good intents and from resolves, like castles in the air came tumbling down.

'Tis said the "dark abyss" is paved with good intents, with resolutions fair and bright as angel sings O, may the new resolves with which we give the infant year give added luster to "streets of gold" which lead to mansions that are ready

made for those who, true to firm conviction and resolve, have won high triumphs in life's battles conquering every foe.

Today our feet press trustingly the threshold of another century, with its first new year. How rare the privilege of all who live today who hold a place in two round centuries, whose short life history has a niche in each. Let us redeem the time. How fast the sands of life run out. The old year dies counting our number less. With deep compunctions over misspent time and duties left undone, with quickened pulse, and new born zeal, we hail the glad new year hoping for better things to be recorded on its pages fair. Then fare thee well thou dear old century, thou hast our records each, safe in thy keeping, and thou hast bore them on to vast eternity. We bury thee most tenderly, thou family of years in memory's casket, there shalt thou be cherished, until we meet thee in the resurrection morn.

OCCASIONAL TEMPERANCE PROGRAMS

From 1900 till the present time occasional temperance programs have been rendered under the direction of Mrs. C.R. Robinson: the present leader being Mrs. M.L. Brown. During all these years until the present time work of Biblical inculcation and dissemination of the truth has been carried on with a good degree of interest and success. The largest and perhaps the most enthusiastic Bible classes on our record are first the class taught by Dr. Buck during his pastorate here which numbered 80 to 100 pupils. The second was the class taught by Mrs. M.M. VanBenschoten during the nineties which numbered thirty-four and the third class taught at the present time by Mr. J. Epsenschied numbering forty.

A Home Department in connection with our school has recently been organized by Mrs. R.H. Palmer who is the present superintendent with a membership of 125 which places our total membership at 445 at the present time.

HONOR IN OTHER FIELDS

It may be of interest to follow for a moment some who have gone out from our ranks and who have won distinction and success in other professional fields of labor. Albert Coleman who went out from our Sunday school in 1873, in due time, became Senator Coleman of Kansas and he declared that Mr. Benton made him all he was a Christian man. Dr. Graves, a Newark boy of '58 now a dentist of high repute in Brooklyn. And Eugene Peck today holds up the standards of the cross as an evangelist, a boy of '76. Four have become far famed as members of the bar; one of who is Senator Raines of Canandaigua and one Judge Sutherland of Rochester, three are national officials of the W.C.T.U., Mrs. M. Allen and her young daughter Martha Dye Ellis, who became a very effective Gospel Temperance speaker and who for many years has served the W.C.T.U. as Superintendent of Legislature at Washington. J.W. Hinman has served as superintendent of our Sunday school in Clyde for 32 successive years. Three more, in western towns, the same position filled for years. While tight physicians carry balms for every ill, Three in California, one in each place, Rochester, Buffalo and Oswego and the late Drs. Crosby and Nutten of Newark. John M. Ives, the organ blower of '65, acquired fame and popularity as a commercial traveler having gone the world around and now with dignity and grace he wields the pen for the Chamber of Commerce in the city of Rochester. While three have left our ranks and preach the word today from Episcopalian desks. Young Wesley, Benhan and Hodgson brothers. And Milton Buck proclaims the truth from zions walls in California; two have become principals of schools. Will Osborn and Young Congdon; and one a missionary to India, Ms. Jennie. Among the last to fly from our church home nest is Dr. Shaw who folded his wings in Gloversville where he has won an enviable reputation as a dentist and one still later, young VanBenschoten plumed his wings and lighted on a perch in Brooklyn, where he dispenses law, and

brings to justice all delinquents. One office yet remains for us to lend a helping hand in filling and the present prophecies and indications are that at the end of the next decade we shall have a bishop ready for the Methodist church by the name of Copeland.

One feature of especial interest to us today lies in the fact that we still have with us hale and hearty the daughter of the man who originated the first Sunday school that was ever organized in Newark and who was one of its first Sunday school superintendents in the old white church of 1827, now the town hall. It is a pleasant sight on Sunday morning to see the daughter of a sturdy pioneer, Mrs. Louise Crummett Lendon, leading by the hand her young grandchildren a mile to church and then upstairs to the primary department after which she takes her accustomed place in Mrs. Hodgson's Bible class. Her membership in the Sunday school of this church covers a period of seventy-two years. Her active mind and memory have furnished many items of interest for this centennial celebration one of which is the following.

NEWARK'S FIRST BORN

The first child ever born in Newark, Mr. Harrison Harland, remembers attending the Methodist Sunday school in 1834.

In 1885 these came into our church and Sunday school a bride and groom in the full strength and vigor of beautiful young man and womanhood; the bride a daughter of our pastor, the Rev. John Dennis and the groom prof. afterward the Rev. Francis D. Hodgson. This couple gave us a few years of valuable service in planting the seeds of truth and then responded to the call for service elsewhere and after many years of teaching, preaching and travel they returned to give us the benefit of their well stored minds and to find the seed they had sown in early life bearing abundant fruitage and the songs of love they had sung they found "from end to end in the hearts of their friends." As this is a tie for breaking

alabaster boxes we would say that Mary Dennis Hodgson is with us still doing with her might what her hands find to do. It is also a matter of congratulation that Mrs. J.W. Benton who like her early friend and associate Mrs. Hodgson – also came to this church and Sunday school a bride, is still with us. During all the years of their married life she worked side by side with her husband in the interests of church and Sunday school and it is our united prayer that these pioneers of Methodism may bless the church with their presence for years to come.

In reviewing the past fifty years, well may we say What hath God wrought. Truly He hath not dealt so with any people, and as for his judgments we have not known them. Still clinging to the faith of our fathers, let us press on believing that "He teaches best who feels the hearts of all men in his breast and knows their strength or weakness through his own." And God shall sever the sea and open a way in the wilderness, to faith that follows, to feet that press on, into the great To Be!

THE HISTORY IN RECENT YEARS

The history of the M. E. Sunday school since the centennial of 1905, has been one of progress on all lines of S. S. work. The superintendents during this period have been as follows: T.B. Barnes, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Ernest Fox, Mr. W. E. Cook and Mr. Hallagan; the last named being the present incumbent. Mrs. J.J. Smith is still superintendent of the primary department.

There are 17 classes in the school; the largest being those of the following: T.B. Barnes has enrolled 80 pupils; Prof. Fort, 55; Miss Anna Miller, 35; Mr. Herendeen, 20. The primary department has a membership of 89 with 7 teachers. The total enrollment of the school at the present time is 505. With an able and conscientious corps of teachers, the work of disseminating the Truth is made attractive, interesting and profitable. It is said that silence is golden; yet there are times "a word fifty

spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.” We are especially fortunate in having our primaries and those of the adolescent age so well-provided for. Miss Anna Miller and Mr. Herendeen seem to be solving that most difficult problem of Biblical inculcation among pupils of the adolescent period. There is a pleasant and healthful rivalry between these two classes which adds charm and zest to the general activities.

‘Tis only he who sees the burning brush, takes off his shoes, and thus obedient, claims the rich reward.

We read the work “and all thy children shall be taught of the Lord and great shall be the peace of thy children.” With the peace of our children, we secure the peace of our church, our home and our individual life. We cannot over-estimate the value of the patient, self-sacrificing service of these teachers of our children and youth and especially that of stamping religious and spiritual impressions upon the plastic mind and leading and holding it into channels of thought which will radiate, light and beauty through the unfolding

days of youth, this is indeed a work which angels might covet, a work which must abide; and in mature years develop thoughts and inspirations “whose very sweetness yieldeth proof that they are born for immortality.” The influences that radiate from such conceptions and from such attainments are like benedictions upon all around; even as the rose unfolds its petals day by day and sheds its fragrance on the supplant air.

As a Sunday school, we find ourselves at this time in harmony with the command of Scripture which reads “Enlarge the place of thy tent and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on thy right hand and on thy left.”

Under the influences of our Pastor, Rev. A. J. Saxe and of our Superintendent, Mr. S. S. Hallagan, the atmosphere of our Sunday School is that of progression on all lines of Sunday school work. We hope and expect to double our numbers, our interest and enthusiasm, and our missionary collections during the coming years.