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HISTORICAL SKETCH, No. 28

THE SEATING CAPACITY of our church edifice as originally constructed was nominally nine hundred, but actually, for comfortable sitting, seven hundred and twenty.

While that is a large congregation to secure for regular attendance, yet it was often found inadequate, even during the ministry of Dr. Simmons, to accommodate those who desired to worship with us. Some of the older willing-workers will remember the labor of carrying in chairs and settees on many successive Sunday evenings to accommodate the two or three hundred people that could not find room in the pews, every one being packed full.

Such a state of things also occurred during the ministry of Dr. Randolph and Dr. Thomas, especially on baptismal occasions, Sunday-school anniversaries, and at other times when large audiences were to be provided for.

At the end of the first year of Dr. Peddie's ministry it became evident that the same trouble would be experienced, and that even the regular worshippers were more than could be comfortably seated. On Nov. 29, 1883, at the regular church meeting, Bro. John Fry introduced the following

PREAMBLE AND RESOLUTIONS

We believe that the capacity of our church building is unequal to the comfortable accommodation of the large number of persons who attend the services on the Sabbath; and further, that it is practicable, and therefore expedient, to make an enlargement of the main audience room, so that a greater number of persons may be comfortably seated; therefore

Resolved, That a committee of nine be appointed, with the request that they examine the whole subject, and be authorized to receive plans, specifications and estimates of cost, and report to the church as early as convenient.

The Resolution was adopted and the following Committee appointed: C. P. Huffman, E. Turland, J. H. Mann, Chas. H. Banes, Jno. Fry, Jno. E. Potter, Jos. Evans, W. Fred'k Snyder and J. J. Stadiger.

On January 28th, 1884, the Committee reported as follows:

Your Committee, appointed at the last business meeting to devise the best method of enlarging and remodeling the interior of the church edifice, beg leave to report that the subject matter had been referred to three architects, each of whom had submitted plans and specifications for the consideration of the Committee, and, after much careful study, the plan of Isaac Pursell had been unanimously agreed upon as being the most practicable and economical; believing that it will secure as commodious and beautiful an audience room as the present construction of our edifice, with slight exterior alterations, will admit of. Your Committee, therefore, recommend the adoption of the plan of Mr. Isaac Pursell.

(Signed) W. FRED'K SNYDER, Chairman.

The Report was accepted, and the Committee continued. A recess of twenty minutes was taken to examine the plans and estimates, after which the Pastor and Bro. Snyder fully explained all the details. The following resolutions were then adopted:

Resolved, That the Church approve the plans presented by Architect Pursell for enlarging and remodeling the audience room of the Church.

Resolved, That a Committee be appointed with authority to secure by subscription or otherwise the sum of twenty thousand dollars to forward the work.

A special meeting of the church was called for February 11th, to hear the report of the Committee. They reported that they had secured pledges to the amount of \$22,200 toward the work. The report was accepted and the Committee discharged. On motion it was resolved that a Committee of six be appointed to execute the plans for altering and enlarging the church edifice, including in that work the alteration of the Chapel and social room. A Committee was also appointed to collect the subscriptions for the alterations, and Brother W. Frederick Snyder was appointed Treasurer of the Fund. At the regular church meeting, May 26th, the Building Committee asked for authority to enter into an agreement with H. L. Rosefelt to build an organ for the use of the church, at an expense of not more than five thousand dollars. On motion the request was granted. On Friday evening, June 20th, the Pastor, Dr. Peddie, presented the following communication:

To the Pastor and Deacons of the Fifth Baptist Church:—

DEAR BRETHREN:—It gives me great pleasure to enclose the following Resolution, which was unanimously and heartily passed at a meeting of the Central Congregational Church, on Wednesday evening, June 18th, 1884:

Resolved, That the Pastor be requested to extend to the Fifth Baptist Church and congregation an invitation to meet for worship with us on Sabbath and week evenings while their place of worship is closed.

Permit me in extending this invitation to express my personal hope and desire, that you will make our home of worship your home, in the mutual worship and service of our common Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. We shall welcome you most cordially.

Fraternally yours,

JAMES R. DANFORTH, Pastor.

The communication was cordially received and on motion was unanimously and gratefully accepted, and the clerk was instructed to communicate the action to the brethren at 18th and Green Street, through their Pastor, Dr. Danforth. A similar invitation was afterwards received from the Centennial Baptist Church, but was declined with thanks, as the former had already been accepted.

T. T.

