

# Medford Churches Report Progress in 1911

(By REV. W. F. SHIELDS.)

There are eight denominations in Medford with building, and actively engaged in the Christian work of the place. With the founding of the town of Medford there came the establishment of the church. In this place there has prevailed the greatest good-will between the churches. Each denomination has recognized itself a factor in the Kingdom of the Lord, and that its right to exist depended on its value to society in advancing the Cause of Christ. All the churches agree in the fundamental principles of the gospel. There is but one God who is father of all, one Saviour of all mankind, the Lord Jesus; one comforter and guide, the Holy Spirit. No better ecumenism can be passed upon the churches than to say that each vies with the other in its loyalty to Jesus Christ. The church buildings are those erected in the early history of our city, with the exception of the Roman Catholic. These buildings are all inadequate to the present needs, and will in the near future be supplanted by ones suitable to the work in hand. As an institution the church ranks first in importance in every town and community. It develops the religious life, and keeps hope aflame in every breast; and without this there would be no foundation upon which to build an enduring civilization. Our city is not over-churches at present; in the minds of many good citizens and Christians there is a felt need of more churches.

### Presbyterian Church.

The Presbyterian church was organized in 1885 with nine members. Its membership is now 275. The organizations within the church are: The Men's club, the Ladies' Aid, the Woman's Missionary society, the Senior Christian Endeavor society, the Junior Christian Endeavor society, the Girls' club, the F. I. L. society, and the Sunday school. Thirty-six have united with the church this year. The property of the church is valued at \$40,000. The organization stands for all that is uplifting and progressive. Rev. W. F. Shields is the pastor.

### Baptist Church.

The first Baptist church of Medford was organized June 7, 1885. The constituent members were S. L. Bennett, Mrs. S. L. Bennett, Mrs. Frances Lawton, Mrs. E. M. Denison, Mrs. Kittie Webb, Mrs. Eliza Bell, Mrs. M. J. Harriman, Miss Melville Wisley, Mrs. L. E. Freudenberg, of which number only Mr. and Mrs. S. L. Bennett are members at the present time.

For the first six months this church, in common with other churches, held their services in the schoolhouse, there being no house of worship in the town. At the first regular meeting of the church, July 4, a mid-week prayer service was established, and has been kept up without interruption to the present time. When it was deemed advisable to no longer hold meetings in the schoolhouse, they moved to the old town hall. In February, 1887, Dr. J. C. Baker, then state missionary for the Baptist denomination, held a revival meeting, which resulted in 30 additions to the church. Thus strengthened they prepared for more aggressive work. D. T. Lawton and S. L. Bennett were ordained deacons and a house of worship with a seating capacity of 300 was erected, at a cost of \$4000. Although the church had no regular pastor until June, 1887, when Rev. G. G. Thomas took charge, they had since its organization maintained regular services, being supplied by Elders Russell and Black.

In December, 1887, the first Baptist Bible school was organized and has never missed a session to this day.

This church has enjoyed many seasons of prosperity. In 1905 it became necessary to enlarge the auditorium, as large numbers unable to



Street Scene in Medford Upon a Gala Occasion.

get in the house were turned away at each preaching service. An addition was built which gave them a seating capacity of 500, which was often taxed to its utmost. The house is still inadequate to properly handle the large and growing Bible school, and a larger and more modern building is the greatest need of the church today. Since its organization ten pastors have served the church.

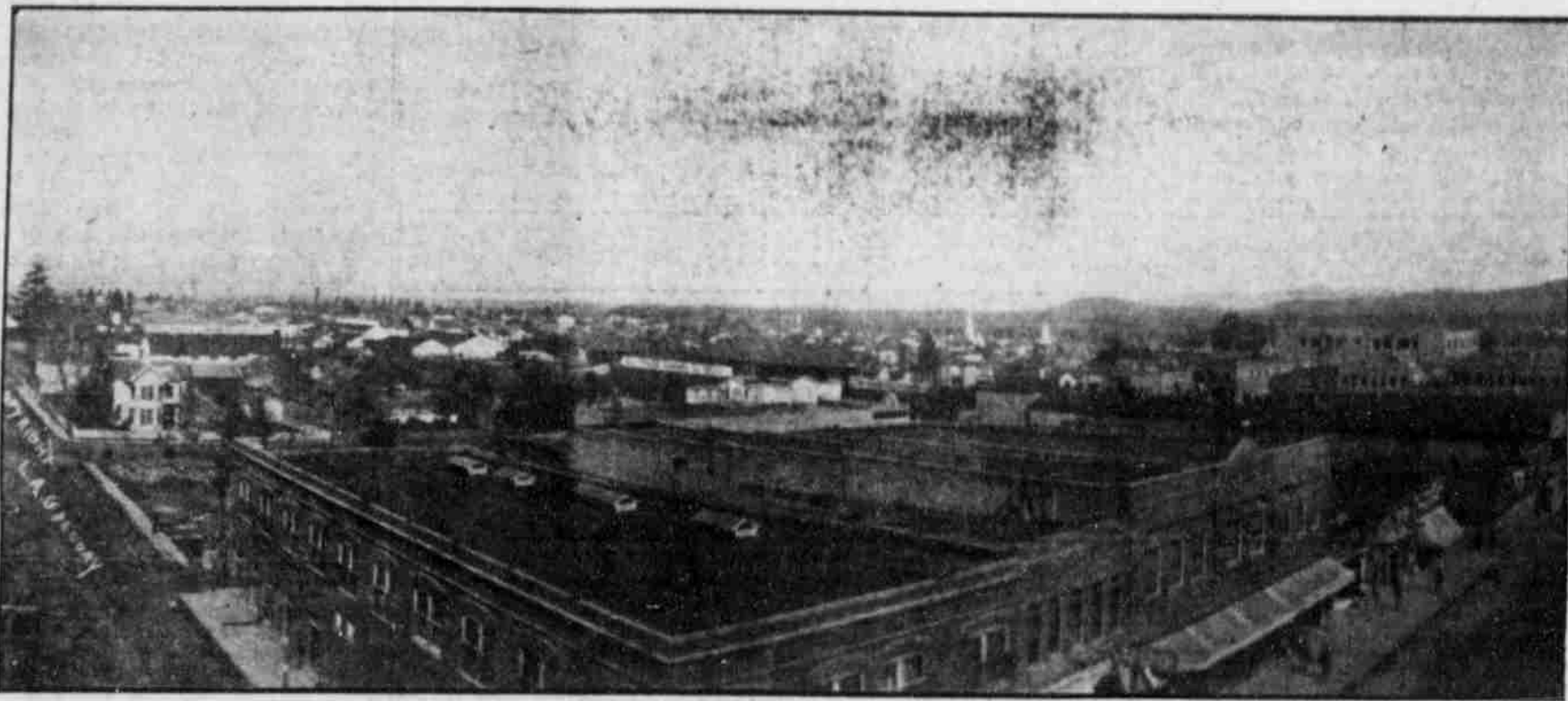
Over \$34,000 has been raised for current expenses of the church and benevolence. Since its organization 930 have been received into the church. Present membership, 344; value of church property, \$25,000. Rev. A. A. Holmes, the present pastor, has had charge of the church two years; 185 have been added to the church during this pastorate, which is the largest number added under any one pastorate.

### M. E. Church.

The First M. E. church was organized in Medford about 26 years ago by Rev. Simpson, and was on a circuit with Jacksonville and Central Point. At first the schoolhouse was used as a place of worship, and later on the Presbyterians having built a small church edifice, allowed the M. E. people to worship there. Later on they moved to Howard hall and it was while there that they decided to build a home of their own.

While in Howard's hall a Sunday school was organized. At this time the society purchased two lots on the southeast corner of Fourth and B streets and commenced the building they now occupy. At that time the membership was very small and it was only by great privations were they able to erect the building, which was considered a fine church. The board of trustees was composed of the following men: C. H. Hoxie, Clark Taylor, E. F. Walker, I. J. Phipps, G. W. Isaacs and D. T. Lawton. The building was completed the following year, and when ready for occupancy had a membership of about 80, including men, women and children. During the years that have intervened some gracious revivals have taken place inside its walls, and it has had a steady, healthy growth, having at this time a membership of 442.

The church is in a very flourishing condition, the pastor, Rev. E. O. Eld-



Panorama of a Portion of Business Center.

ridge, formerly of Washington, D. C., has got complete possession of the hearts of his people, and the congratulations are so large the seating capacity of the church is taxed to its utmost. One hundred chairs have been purchased and placed in the aisles and vacant places.

The Sunday school, under the efficient superintendency of Clarence Meeker, has a membership of 483. The church being inadequate to accommodate the school, three classes have quarters in other places. The men's class, which is led by Mr. Ed Steep, has a membership of 151. They are organized, their president being Mr. Bennett and secretary Mr. Brainard. They are quartered in a large tent, having a floor and stove, near the church. Mr. and Mrs. D. T. Lawton have classes of young ladies numbering 65, which they hold in their home just north of the church.

On account of the large congregations the members have decided to build a larger edifice, and have purchased two lots on the northeast corner of Bartlett and Third streets, one block north of the present church, and are having plans prepared at this time, and in the early spring will commence building operations and ex-

pect to have it ready for occupancy next fall.

The finance committee is composed of James Campbell, chairman; G. R. Lindley and Bert Anderson. The building committee is composed of D. T. Lawton, chairman; C. A. Meeker, C. H. Corey, Alfred Ivey, S. L. Leonard, H. B. Chiddester and N. J. Wiley.

### Free Methodist Church.

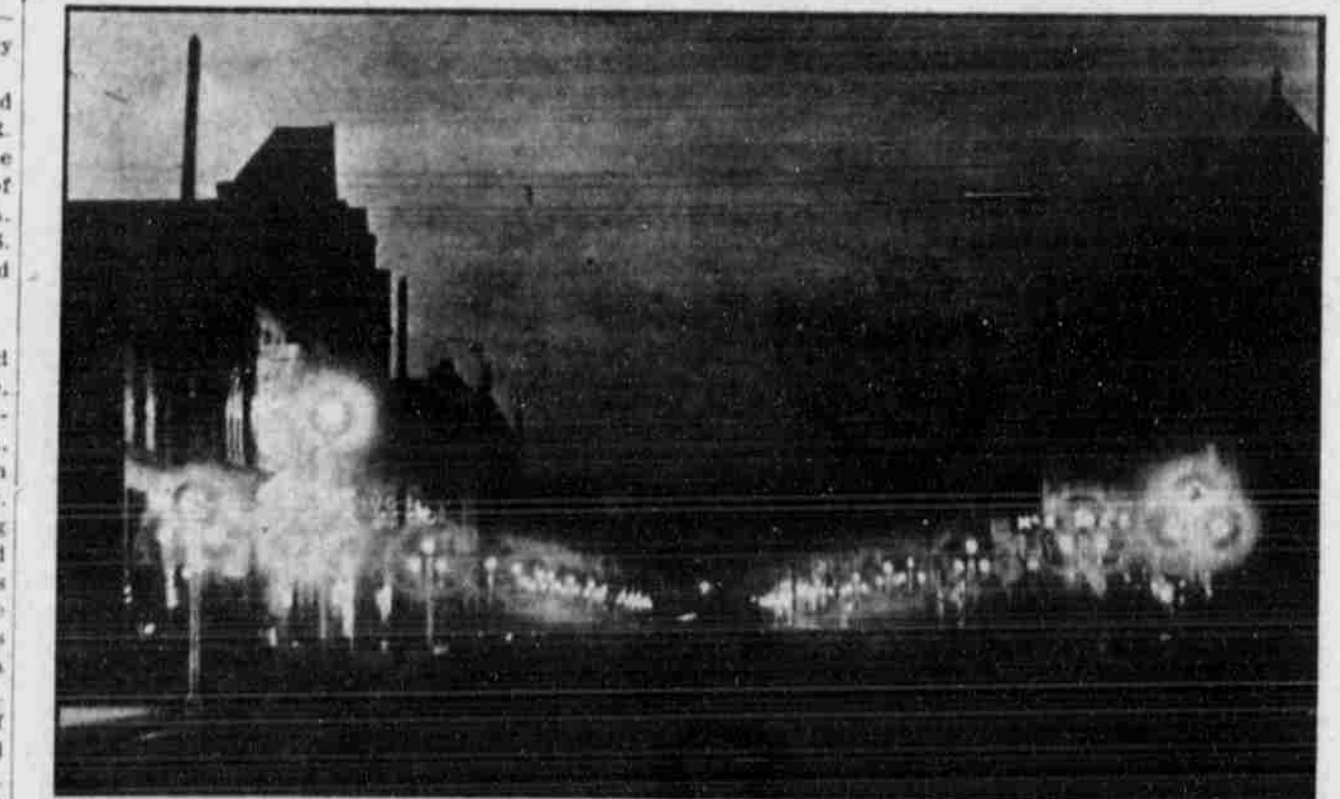
September 30, 1898, S. Emery and wife, and H. S. Brumble and wife, were the first Free Methodists to arrive in Medford. A. W. Countryman, J. T. Eads and wife, and others, soon followed. In February, 1900, Rev. W. E. Good held a quarterly meeting here and organized a class, and did much to build up the church in this place. A. W. Countryman was the first pastor. In 1905 F. Smith was pastor. A lot was secured and a church and parsonage were erected. Last year, under the pastorate of Rev. E. I. Harrington, a large and commodious parsonage was erected. Rev. J. W. Sharpe is the present pastor.

This church is prospering. The General Conference of the church has ordered the organizing of a southern Oregon Conference, which will convene in their church in Medford, May 8, 1912, Bishop Hogue presiding.

The Free Methodists are Methodists in doctrine, adhering firmly to the doctrine of holiness. They were abolitionists in the times of slavery. They insist on free seats in all their churches, congregational singing—without choirs or organs—plain, neat dress, no tobacco or secret societies, and in religion in earnest, and are prohibitionists. Nearly all their members, even children, readily pray and testify for Christ in public. Their church is located at Tenth and Ivy streets.

### Christian Church.

The First Christian church of Medford was organized on November 24, 1884. At the present time there is a resident membership of about 225. This church has a thriving Bible school, with an average attendance of over 125, a good, live Christian Endeavor, a splendid Ladies' Aid society and a growing auxiliary of the Christian Woman's Board. The church property at the corner of Sixth and Ivy has been sold, and in the spring a new and fine church edifice will be erected on South Oakdale.



Main Street at Night Showing Cluster Lights Recently Installed.

The past year has been one of splendid progress along all lines. The church has been strengthened by a substantial increase in membership and has made good spiritual developments. Rev. D. D. Boyle is the pastor, having but lately come to the church.

### Episcopal Church.

The St. Mark's Episcopal church two years ago erected a business block at the corner of Main and Holly streets, with 100 feet of frontage on Main street. This building has been completed at a cost of some \$32,000. It consists of four stores, eight offices and a large guild hall, with two well-furnished parlors, a well-equipped kitchen, etc. A steam heating plant heats the whole building. At present the Sunday school and church services are being held in the guild hall. The foundation of the new church edifice awaits the necessary funds to erect the elegantly planned house of worship. This church is at present without a rector, but one is promised to be in charge in the near future. This church is an important factor in the religious work of our city.

### M. E. Church South.

The M. E. church south was organized in Medford about 20 years ago with a membership of six. This

church has made steady progress. It has a membership now of about 100. The property of this church is on the corner of Oakdale and Main streets, opposite the Washington school. This is valuable property and well located for church work. It is the purpose of the church to build a modern house of worship in the near future. There are services in this church every Sunday as follows: Sunday school at 10 a. m.; preaching at 11 a. m.; Epworth league and Bible study at 6:30 p. m.; preaching at 7:30 p. m.; prayer meeting every Thursday at 7:30 p. m. Everybody welcome. Strangers especially invited. Rev. W. T. Gulder is pastor.

### German Lutheran Church.

The German Lutheran church is located at the corner of Oakdale and Fourth streets. There is a large German element in our city, and the services of the church are conducted in the German language. There is a church building and manse owned by this people, valued at about \$8000. The Lutherans are everywhere noted for their morality and Godliness, and the people of this church are upright and industrious. Their plans for the future are equal to the expected growth of the numbers of their people.

### Seventh-Day Adventists Church.

The Adventists church is on North Riverside. A house of worship was built two years ago. This church is prosperous, and has in connection with the church a school for the instruction of its young people in secu-

All within and without the churches should co-operate in securing for our city a Y. M. C. A.

### First Church of Christ, Scientist.

First Church of Christ, Scientist, of Medford, holds its services every Sunday morning at 11 o'clock, Sunday school at 10, Wednesday evening meeting at 7:30, in their church edifice at 212 North Oakdale. The public is cordially invited to attend these services.

The edifice is of the bungalow style of architecture and contains a reading room, which is open to the public daily from 2 to 5 o'clock, except Sunday; a warm, pleasant, well lighted room, with an attendant who receives visitors.

All the Christian Science literature is for sale and also for free reading. The edifice, erected one year ago, is modern in design, complete in its appointments, and with its extensive lawn adds materially to the beauty of the street.

## Greater Medford Club

Greater Medford club is an organization of women that exists for the purpose of general civic improvement, and from its beginning has untiringly bent its energies in the direction of the "city beautiful." The club began its labors at a time when there were so many problems of streets, of drainage, of lighting and generally providing for this rapidly growing city, that their co-operation with the administration was genuinely welcome; at a time, indeed, when the present city park was a potato patch; and it is largely due to this club that the park is now what it is, and that many rows of young shade trees now line our curbs. For three or four years the club managed and maintained the public library.

During the past year they have placed 14 seats in the city park, have had walks constructed through the newer portion, oft of gravel which was donated for that purpose, and have filled in and improved the older walks. They have placed two sanitary drinking fountains, also donated, one in the main park and one in the newly parked plat in the north end of town, and their latest achievement has been the construction of the fine bandstand which adorns the city park and which is now all but completed. Besides these accomplishments, they have looked

lar and religious knowledge. This church asks for its share in the moral uplift of our city.

### Roman Catholic Church.

The Roman Catholic church was organized early in the history of Medford. The first church building was on North Front street. Three years ago a fine church building was erected on South Oakdale, and also a manse for the priest. St. Mary's academy stands on the corner of Holly and Twelfth streets. A large hospital is just being completed in East Medford that represents an investment of thousands in dollars, and of much consecrated service in the care of the sick. As all the buildings of this church are new and up-to-date, it is ready for the present and prepared for the increased growth in the future of our city.

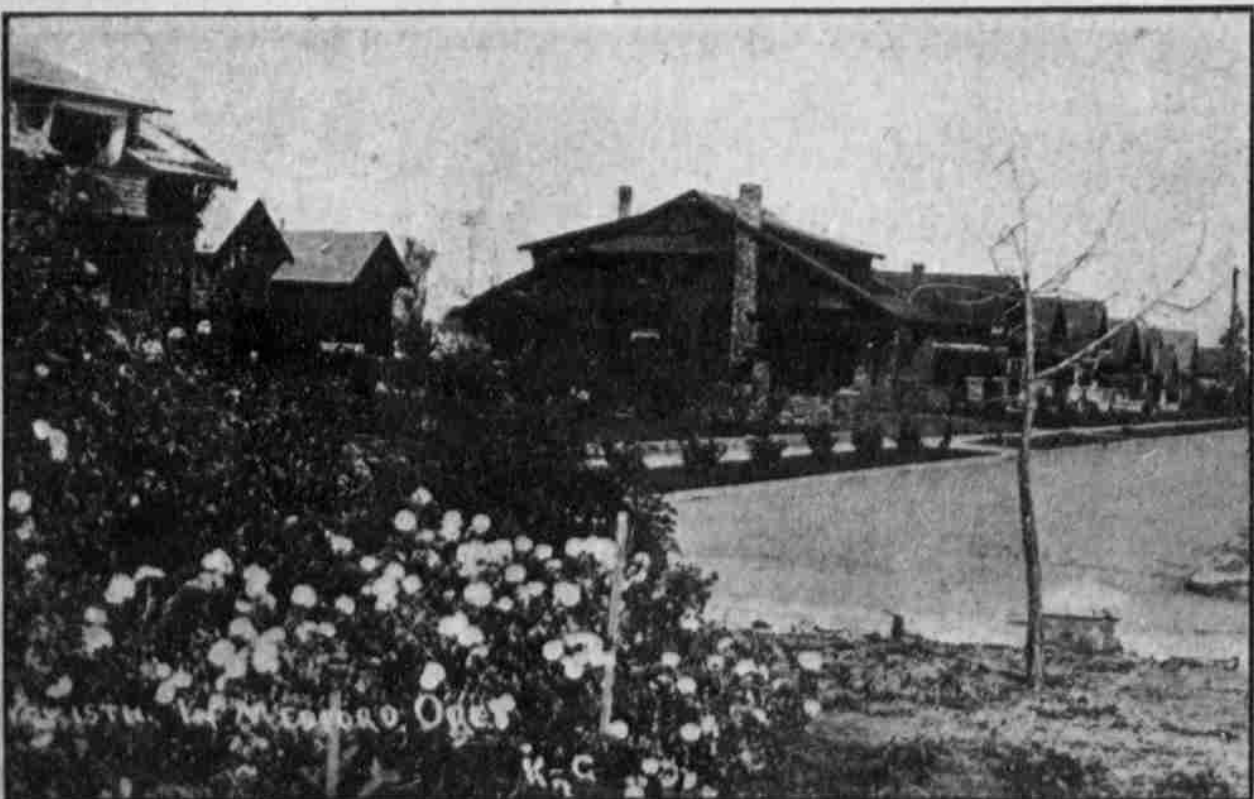
### The Y. M. C. A.

The churches have done their best to drive out evil institutions and to make for the best environment for the life of our people. The one great need of our city is a Y. M. C. A. organization and a building for its work. To this end the churches will bend their energies in the near future. We best overcome the evil institution by placing within reach of our people the good institution.

after the park lighting and have planted any number of plants and shrubs.

But the club does not confine itself to work for the "city beautiful" in its more obvious phases; it devotes some time to consideration of the city clean and moral. Last year, very largely through their suggestions, an effort was almost universally made on the part of merchants to comply with the ordinance for the protection of certain vegetables and fruits from contamination, and the splitting ordinance was brought prominently before the attention of citizens by card placards which the club had printed and which they posted throughout the city.

At present the club is turning its attention toward certain social needs which Medford has long acknowledged. There has existed a standing complaint among young women of the place that there was "nothing to do evenings" and "no place to go." To meet this need Junior Association of Greater Medford club has been organized. This new branch association is now working to establish a centrally located "social center," which will be social not only for purposes of the members but in the larger sense of general social service.



A Row of Recently Built Bungalows.