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THE CONTRIBUTION
OF THE
CHURCH FEDERATION MOVEMENT
TO CHURCH UNITY

By

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INTRODUCTION

STATEMENT OF SUBJECT

It is the purpose of this thesis to consider one of the plans that has been advanced as a means of uniting the Protestant Churches. Our problem is to investigate the Church Federation movement in an endeavor to determine what contribution this movement has made in uniting the churches. Our investigation will be limited to a consideration of the movement as it has developed in the United States, in its local and national aspects. Thus the study will be an investigation of the national organization known as The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, or as it is more generally termed, The Federal Council; and the local federations as they are named in their Constitutional statements.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM

One of the favorite themes of those who continually criticize and oppose the Christian churches is the lack of cooperation or unity among the various denominations. Whenever one speaks with the man of the streets, invariably the churches are charged with teaching a doctrine of Christian brotherhood which they fail to practice. The extent of this criticism is more fully realized when we consider a few of the books that condemn the churches on this point.¹

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1. The Church and the New World Order, Preaching Against Paganism, The Church at the Cross Roads, The Church in the Furnace, The Outlook for Religion, The Church and the Hour, The Reconstruction of Religion, The Reconstruction of the Church, Can We Still be Christian? Shall We Stand by the Church? Why not Face the Facts? The New Horizon of State and Religion, The Challenge of the Present Crisis, The Scandal of Christianity, If Not a United Church, What?

The results of religious surveys have revealed localities that are overchurched, which have become contesting grounds for denominational supremacy. We also learn that numerous localities exist where there is very little, if any, religious work being done. The question has been raised as to why the Protestant churches have not devised some method which would enable them to work together, conserving time, money, and effort in order to more adequately distribute their resources and to carry on their work where it is most needed and in such a manner as to produce the most favorable results.

Many articles have been written by individuals both in and out of the church, imploring the Protestant churches of America to present a closely knit cooperating body against the degrading forces of our nation and the foes of Christ. It is imperative that the Protestant churches meet such criticism and appeals through some system of unified action. In view of the fact that we believe that this question of bringing the Protestant churches into a more unified relationship is one that will have to be definitely settled in the near future, we consider it a worthwhile project to investigate the Church Federation Movement to determine what contribution it is making to bring the Protestant churches into a united brotherhood.

METHOD

The method of study will be conducted along four lines. First, a historical survey of the movement, beginning with the background out of which it evolved to its present status. Second, a study of the form the movement has taken; the theory on which it is based, and the actual structure, to see what kind of an organization has been developed that will unify the various denominations into one group. Third, a con-

consideration of the activities carried on under the auspices of the national organization and the local federations in the United States. Fourth, a concluding statement relative to our findings as they have emerged during the course of this investigation.

SOURCES

The sources which have been used in this study are primarily the records of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ, official publications of this body; the Constitutions and publications of the local federations; and books dealing with the subject. In a number of instances information has been given by the officials of the Federal Council and Dr. Saunderson of the Institute of Social and Religious Research, covering points on which there is very little published material.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The term church unity is quite varied in its use and application. In this paper the terms unity, united, etc. will not be used in a sense of organic union or a fusion of two or more churches. Here it will signify cooperative church activity and indicate a process plus the spirit, of courtesy and goodwill, with the greatest respect for the rights and purpose of the cooperating agencies in which the cooperative work of the churches is carried on. It is thus intended to contrast with competition in the expansion and the activity of the churches.

In further defining our terms so as to avoid any misunderstanding, the following quotations are given relative to the way in which we shall use the term federal unity.

Dr. C. S. Macfarland has said: "Federal unity is simply denominationalism in cooperation, it is the effort to adjust autonomy and corporate action, individuality and social solidarity, liberty and social adaption."¹

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1. Macfarland, C.S. Progress of Church Federation. pp. 9.

The great historian, Phillip Schaff, has given us this definition: "Federate or confederate union is a voluntary association of different churches in their official capacity, each retaining its freedom and independence in the management of its internal affairs. But all recognizing one another as sisters with equal rights, and cooperating in general enterprises such as the spread of the Gospel at home and abroad; defense of the faith against infidelity; the education of the poor and neglected classes of society; workers of philanthropy and charity and moral reform."¹

W. B. Hyde, speaking on church extension work, stated that: "Cooperation in Church extension simply means that the several denominations shall consult together concerning the interests of the Kingdom in a given territory, and so distribute their forces as to present at each point the most effective force and the most attractive Christian life that a wise direction of their united strength makes possible."

For our use in this paper we will accept as a federated body two or more individual churches differing in denomination, each related to its own denominational body, which have entered into an agreement to act together as regards mutual affairs.

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1. Schaff, Phillip. "Reunion of Christendom", Christianity Practically Applied. pp. 316.

CHAPTER I

EARLY COOPERATIVE GROUPS

CHAPTER I - HISTORY

A. EARLY CO-OPERATIVE GROUPS

In its earliest discovery and settlement the eastern coast of the United States came under the control of the Protestant powers of Europe. The Puritan in New England, the Baptist in Rhode Island, the Reformed in New York, the Presbyterian in New Jersey, the Quaker in Pennsylvania and the Episcopalian of Virginia, with scattered companies of Huguenots and other sects, brought to our shores wide differences of policy and doctrine.

Up to the time of the Revolutionary War, the differing types of Protestantism were so rooted and sectionally divided that they interfered but little with one another.

The chaotic state of affairs following the Revolution, combined with the malign influence of atheistic thought and philosophy of Europe, left the United States very low in spiritual life at the close of the Eighteenth Century. Gradually the tide turned. During the early years of the Nineteenth Century the series of revivals, which continued periodically throughout the whole country, were begun. The era of "good feeling" arose in the nation's political life, and the Church began its great growth along with the development of other phases of life in the history of the American people.

It is during the first few years of the Twentieth Century that we note the beginnings of the astonishing numerical growth of denominations. It is also in this period that we have the rise of movements

protesting against denominational rivalry, seeking for and demanding visible expressions of the Christian Brotherhood, which was the great theme of the Master.¹

This need and desire for interdenominational co-operation found expression in voluntary groups, organized for the spread of Christian literature and knowledge of the Bible, together with the unifying of the Protestant Brotherhood. These groups of interdenominational character, stretching over the whole century, were the pioneers who prepared the way for the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

* TRACT SOCIETIES

The first of these was the Massachusetts Society for the Promoting of Christian Knowledge, organized in 1803, an offspring of the Tract Society movement begun in England. Similar societies soon followed. Among the most prominent were the New York Religious Tract Society, founded in 1812, and the New England Tract Society, founded in 1814.²

Certain individuals, wishing to eliminate the overlapping and waste caused by local societies operating too closely together, suggested plans for the formation of a national Tract Society, combining the strength of all the local units. The merger was effected on May 11, 1825,³ and the organization has since grown to be one of the influential religious bodies in America.

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* Tract Societies are agencies for the production and distribution, or the distribution only, of Christian literature.

1. cf. Church Federation. Report of Interchurch Conference on Federation, 1905, Introduction.

2. Encyclopedia Britannica. Vol. 27. pp. 117.
New International Encyclopedia. Vol. 22. pp. 397

3. Dorchester, D. The Church in the United States. pp.416-49.

DISCIPLES

The Disciples of Christ, or the Christians as they are sometimes called, reflect the protest against denominationalism. "This body was one of the results of the great revival movement which began in Tennessee and Kentucky in the early part of the 19th Century. The Reverend Barton Stone withdrew from the Presbyterian Church and in 1804 formed a group with no other creed than the Bible and no other name than that of Christian. One of its objectives was to find a basis for the Union of all Christian believers." ¹ This group, led by Stone, finally coalesced with a group of Baptists from Vermont and New Hampshire to form the infant Christian Church. "The leading principles were to restore the lost Unity of believers and so of the Church of Christ by a return in doctrine, ordinances, and life to the religion definitely outlined in the New Testament." ²

BIBLE SOCIETIES

Another agency which contributed to the breaking down of the strict denominational spirit, making way for more co-operative movements, was the rise of American Bible societies. The Philadelphia society founded in 1808 was the first of its kind to be organized in the United States. The Connecticut Bible Society and several others, including those of New York and Massachusetts, were organized the following year. Circulars were sent to influential persons of all denominations throughout the country, urging them to establish similar societies. Within six years, more than one thousand such groups had been organized.

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1. Carroll, H. K. The Religious Forces of the United States. pp.125-6.
Jennings, W. W. A Short History of the Disciples. pp.56-7.
 2. Carroll, H. K. The Religious Forces of the United States. pp.126

The British association gave several large gifts of money to promote the work in America among the State societies. A survey of the West as to the need for Bibles and Christian literature was made under the auspices of the New Jersey society. The results of the investigation led to the calling of a convention for the purpose of organizing a national body competent to meet the needs discovered. All kindred organizations gradually became amalgamated with this national body, and the federation was completed in 1839 by the adhesion of the Pennsylvania society. Immediately the great work of distributing the Word throughout America and the world was begun.¹

Y.M.C.A.

One of the most extensive and effective interdenominational movements, the Young Men's Christian Association, was begun on June 6, 1844, through the efforts of George Williams, a draper's assistant. The movement spread with mushroom-like rapidity, until it became established in nearly all parts of Europe.

In December, 1851, associations were formed in Boston and Montreal. Within three years some forty odd branches were established on this continent. A general conference was held at Buffalo, New York, in 1850, where a national association was formed. The object of the organization was "to improve the spiritual and mental condition of young men". Membership meant a definite acceptance of the doctrines of the Evangelical faith.

Later an international alliance was formed on the basis that "the

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 1. Dwight, Henry Otis. The Centennial History of the American Bible Society. pp.

Young Men's Christian Association seeks to unite those young men who, regarding Jesus Christ as their God and Savior according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to be His disciples in their doctrine and in their life, and to associate their efforts for the extension among young men."¹

A similar movement for women was begun in 1855, which is practically the same in character as the men's association.²

MISSIONARY SOCIETIES

Several of the great missionary societies began their work during the first five decades of the Nineteenth Century, and the examples that they subsequently set on the foreign field, in their co-operative movements and united service, have been one of the outstanding achievements of the missionary program. The necessity for unified work on the foreign field has brought about a close correlation between the mission boards of all the Churches. The success of their co-operative work has exerted considerable influence on home mission enterprises in the United States.

EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE

Carlyle has said "that history is the essence of innumerable biographies and the record of the men who have lived here."³ Especially is it true of the next movement which we are to study, The Evangelical Alliance. This organization, which is the genesis of the Federation

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1. Payton, L. B. Recent Christian Progress, pp.420. Y.M.C.A. Handbook.
 2. cf. Wilson, E. Fifty Years Association Work Among Young Women.
 3. Sanford. Origin and History of The Federal Council of Churches. pp.92.

Council, is a biography of the great men of two continents, Europe and America.

Dr. Samuel Schumucker, one of the great Lutheran Divines of this period, was instrumental in bringing the question of interdenominational activity into the foreground. While president of Gettysburg Seminary he published a book entitled Fraternal Relations, in which he submitted a plan for Union. This publication brought him such renown that at the first conference in 1846 he was acknowledged as the father of the Evangelical Alliance.

The movement arose in Great Britain and was formally launched when invitations were extended to attend an international Church conference. Some eight hundred Christians from fifty different denominations responded - from Great Britain, France, Switzerland, Germany, the United States and other countries.¹ A nine point doctrinal creed was accepted as a definite basis around which all could center as Evangelical promoters of the Faith.

1. The Divine inspiration, authority, and sufficiency of the Holy Scripture.

2. The right and duty of private judgment.

3. The unity of the God-head and the trinity of persons therein.

4. The utter depravity of human nature in consequence of the fall.

5. The incarnation of the Son of God, His work of atonement for the sins of mankind, and His mediatorial intercession and reign.

6. The justification of the sinner by faith alone.

7. The work of the Holy Spirit in the conversion and sanctification of the sinner.

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1. Report of the Christian Conference of the Evangelical Alliance for the United States, 1889. National Needs and Remedies. pp. 11.

8. The immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body with the eternal blessedness of the righteous and the eternal punishment of the wicked.

9. The Divine institution of the Christian ministry and the obligation and perpetuity of the ordinance of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

The American branch was organized in New York on January 30, 1867, with W. E. Dodge as president. Local Alliances were formed in the various states, and national conferences were called periodically to consider the best ways and means to carry on the Evangelical works and social duties of the Protestant Church. Likewise, international conferences were held to cope with the world wide problems.¹

The aims, motives and results sought can be most easily stated by quotations from the addresses and correspondence of those closely allied and deeply interested in the Alliance. Dr. Josiah Strong, executive secretary, made the following statement in a letter to E. B. Sanford.

"This movement sprung from a recognition of the perils which threaten our Christian and American civilization, and the great social problems which press for solution. It is our belief that the Gospel of Christ affords the only solution of these problems, but how is it to be applied? A very large proportion of the people, 'the masses', do not attend the churches. The leaven which alone can leaven the lump is not mingled with the meal. If the people will not come to the Churches, the Churches must go to the people. The method therefore by which the movement aims to bring the Churches and the non-Church goers into contact is that of co-operation in sustained house to house visitations. The acquaintance with the homes of the people brings to light the needs of the community and shows what needs to be done. And the Churches of the community stand ready to co-operate in doing it. Then there is wide practical application of the Gospel to the community."²

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1. cf. Sanford, E. B. Origin and History of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. pp. 92.
 2. Sanford. Origin and History of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. pp. 93.

Mr. J. A. Arnold of England made this statement in his address before the international gathering in Chicago.

"The great aim has been, therefore, to promote and extend brotherly love and union among the various denominations in our country. To emphasize the duty of moderation in every controversy, of a generous allowance for differences of judgment and of cordial affection between all who are truly followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. The effect of this testimony, borne consistently and persistently during forty-seven years, is seen in the changed aspect of the religious matters of the country. There is now a far greater amount of Christian Union and Cooperation among the various Evangelical Churches than was the case fifty years ago."¹

Dr. Strong, speaking for the American representatives, said:

"When the delegates representing many countries met in London in 1846 to form the Evangelical Alliance the object was the furtherance of religious opinion with the intent to manifest and strengthen Christian Unity, and to promote religious liberty and cooperation in Christian work without interfering with the internal affairs of the different denominations. The Evangelical Alliance is no less ready now than formerly to exert the utmost energies in behalf of religious liberty as occasions may arise. But the supreme aim at the present time is to assist the Churches to see and accomplish their social mission. And the nature and magnitude of that mission is fully appreciated. The cooperation of the churches, which the Alliance has always sought to foster, will follow as a matter of course. For the work will be seen to be too vast and varied for accomplishment, save by the united energies and coordinated activities of all the Churches."²

The ideals of the organization are summarized in the address of Mr. Bonney, president of the World's Congress of 1893.

"The first all prevailing and commanding object of the organization is Christian Unity. That means unity of all who breathe the name of Christ in reverence and who adore Him under any form of Faith, whatever they may be; and further, the object is to promote and push any Christian work. And this last object of the Evangelical Alliance comprehends all the others, in such a way that where all are cooperating in Christian work, they will not fail to exercise towards each other the privilege of liberty, and seek to promote Christian unity. And this without interfering with the internal affairs of the different denominations. The Quaker,

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1. Report of The International Christian Conference, 1893. Christianity Practically Applied. Vol.I. pp. 238.
2. Report of The International Christian Conference. Christianity Practically Applied, Vol.I, pp. 249-250.

the Episcopalian, the Baptist and members of all denominations may each worship God in his own way, may each have the forms and expressions and services which he may find best suited and adapted to his circumstances."¹

This Alliance had no ecclesiastical authority. Neither was there any form of controlling authority, and the general Alliance appears in active operation only when it is met in international conferences. As stated by the president of the American organization, "it is an association of individuals and does not claim to represent any branch of the Church".² The American Alliance gradually decreased in its influence upon national Church life as its work was taken over by other organizations. However, it still exists in theory. Annual conferences are held by a small group of directors, most of whom hold executive offices in the Federal Council of Churches organization, to determine what shall be done with an endowment income held in the name of the American Alliance.³

OPEN AND INSTITUTIONAL CHURCH LEAGUE

The movement which directly promoted the Federal Council of Churches organization was one of these voluntary fellowships, born through the efforts of a number of New York clergymen, who were firm believers in the institutional Church. These men were firmly convinced that it was part of the duty of the Church to include in its program a proper emphasis upon the social and physical needs of mankind, and to provide recreation clubs, gymnasiums, and proper hospital attention for those to whom it was

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1. Report of The International Christian Conference, 1893.
Christianity practically applied. pp.3 Vol. I
 2. Ibid.
 3. Information derived from a personal interview with Dr. Moore, one of the present trustees of the Alliance, and executive secretary of the Federal Council.

not available. ¹

This group, known as the Open and Institutional League, came as the result of a meeting of a number of prominent men who met together upon the request of Dr. C. L. Thompson, Pastor of the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, on March 27, 1894. Among those present were Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists, and Presbyterians. These men were all practical idealists who were laboring in different fields, constantly facing the social and physical needs of congested centers of population.

"The 'League' stood for open Church doors for every day and all the day, free seats, a plurality of Christian workers, a ministry to all the community through educational and philanthropic as well as more spiritual channels. To the end that men might be won to Christ and His service, and the Church of which He is the Head be brought back to the simplicity and comprehensiveness of its primitive life, until it could be said of every community, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is within you and Christ is all in all'." ²

Charles Stelzle has graphically described this organization in his book, *Christianity's Storm Center*.

"The spirit and aim of the institutional Church is expressed in the platform of the Open and Institutional Church League. Inasmuch as the Christ came to not to be ministered unto but to minister, the Open and Institutional Church filled and moved by His spirit and ministering love, seeks to become the center and source of all beneficent and phi-

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cf.

1. Judson, Edward. *The Church in its Social Aspect*. pp. 7.
Gladden, W. *The Christian Pastor and the Working Church*. pp. 404-5.
Stelze, Charles. *Christianity's Storm Center*. Pp. 178.
2. Sanford, E. B. *Origin and History of The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America*. pp. 39.

lanthropic effort. And to take the leading part in every movement which has for its end the alleviation of human suffering, the elevation of men and the betterment of the world. Thus the Open and Institutional Church aims to save all men and all the man by all means, abolishing as far as possible the distinction between the religious and the secular. Sanctifying all the day and all means to the great end of saving the world for Christ.¹

The League gradually increased in membership and influence among the Protestant Church world. A periodical, known as the Open Church Magazine, was published to distribute its views.

The ideals of the League began to take more definite form as they began to prove their practicability. Dr. John B. Devins, Pastor of Hope Chapel, organized the Christian ministers and workers laboring in this neighborhood into the East Side Federation of Churches.² From this group came the impulse that brought about the founding of the City Federation during the following year, 1894.

The Alumni Club of Union Seminary appointed a committee to consider the practicability of a federate council among the Churches of New York City, for the purpose of so readjusting and directing its agencies that every family in the destitute parts of the city could be reached. A favorable report was submitted and accepted. A council composed of ministers and laymen representing every Communion in the city was organized. The plan was changed and the federation became a corporate body controlled by a board of directors affiliated with Churches and Christian bodies in the actual membership. Each such organization was given one vote.³

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1. Stelze, Charles. Christianity's Storm Center. pp. 176.
2. cf. Sanford, E. B. Origin and History of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. pp. 42.
3. cf. Church Federation, 1905. pp. 301.

INTERCHURCH CONFERENCE ON FEDERATION

The Open Church League in conjunction with the New York Federation decided to propose a national federation organization. In behalf of this plan a letter was circulated throughout the country, containing two questions.

1. What is your judgment respecting the need and feasibility of the proposed National Federation of Churches?

2. If organized, may we count on your cooperation in every practical way?

The replies were enthusiastic and almost unanimously favorable.¹

Immediate plans were begun to effect such an organization under the auspices of the League.

The example set by New York City Federation expanded into a state-wide organization. Similar associations were formed by other cities and states.

All of the movements of interdenominational character thus far discussed have been voluntary organizations of individual groups of ministers and laymen. These voluntary associations had no official connection with any of the denominations. The major purpose of the proposed National Federation was to promote a corporate body which would officially represent all denominations.

The League Convention of nineteen hundred devoted most of the time to a discussion of the merits and needs of forming such a national body. The plan suggested by Dr. E. B. Sanford was accepted with very little revision. A committee was appointed to perfect this plan. The following year it was formally adopted. As stated, it was to be known as the National Federation of Churches and Christian workers, having as its object the facilitation

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1. Sanford, E.B. Origin and History of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. pp. 110.

and fostering of state and local federations and the promotion of an acceptable national organization.¹ Thus far it has no official connection, being a temporary body only, for the express purpose of instituting an official federation.

The conference of nineteen hundred and two authorized a special committee to call a meeting of denominational delegates to convene in nineteen hundred and five.

The intervening period was spent in preparation for the coming inter-church conference. Speakers were sent to consult with the various local, state and national denominational bodies. A great deal of correspondence was carried on, and every possible detail was arranged for the conference that was to assemble at Carnegie Hall on Wednesday evening, November 15, 1905.²

Official delegates from some thirty denominations, representing over eighteen million church members, were present when the conference assembled. Following the carefully prepared schedule and order of procedure, all phases of the proposed federation were discussed, and a committee was appointed to draw up a plan of federation. After careful investigation, this plan was accepted. Additional committees were formed to carry on the various phases of federation work, and carefully checked reports of their results and suggestions were to be submitted at the next conference.

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1. Sanford. Origin and History of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. pp. 438.

2. cf. Report of the Inter-Church Conference on Federation, 1905. pp. 46.

The conference did not limit its discussion to plans for unification. Other subjects of vital interest to the church world were considered. Leading men in various religious fields gave addresses, of which the following are typical examples:

- Religious Education and the Sunday School.
John Wanamaker.
- Week Day Religious Education.
Rev. George Wenner, D.D.
- The Theological Seminary and Modern Life.
Rev. George Hodges, D.D., D.C.L.

Other papers were read by J. R. Mott, Robert E. Speer, Mr. Von Odgen Vogt, James E. Beaver, Woodrow Wilson, and J. Campbell White.¹

Prior to adjournment, the delegates had agreed to meet again three years later, to take final action on the proposed Federation. The intervening period was left for the denominational bodies to make surveys, investigations, etc. Preliminary studies were made to investigate all probable objections in order that the group would be ready for action at the next meeting.

The general interest of the Protestant Church world is found in the press comments and editorials of the leading religious publications.

"The meeting appeared to be epochal - it marked a new and distinct era of hope for Christianity." (Western Christian Advocate, Chicago). "And mingling with this united song has been the note of longing for the salvation of sinful men and the promotion of the Kingdom of God on Earth."

(Examiner, New York). "Our twentieth century may witness the reunion of Christendom. It is a consummation devoutly to be wished." (Catholic Mirror, Baltimore). "If federation can lead Christians to solidly attack these problems, it will be the morning star of the millenium."

(The Interior, Chicago.)

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1. Sanford, E.B. The Origin and History of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. pp. 271-272.

FEDERAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN AMERICA

The second inter-Church conference was held at Philadelphia, December 2-8, 1908. The formal organization of the federation was completed and a constitution adopted. The aims, objectives, and purposes as stated in the constitution are: "For the prosecution of work that can be better done in union than in separation a council is hereby established whose name shall be the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America."¹ The more specific aims are as follows:

1. To express the fellowship and catholic unity of the Christian Church.
2. To bring the Christian bodies of America into united service for Christ and the world.
3. To encourage fellowship and mutual counsel concerning the spiritual life and the religious activities of the churches.
4. To secure a larger combined influence for the Churches of Christ in all matters affecting the moral and social condition of the people, so as to promote the application of the law of Christ in every relation of human life.
5. To assist in the organization of local branches of the Federal Council to promote its aims in their communities."²

The selection of the personnel of the staff and the various committees was the next step to be taken. After completing these necessary preliminaries, the official work of the federation was begun. Provision was made for the conference to convene quadrennially, while the executive committee and its various branches were to meet annually.

DEVELOPMENT - 1908-12

The period 1908 was formative, the procedure and methods being changed as conditions warranted. The former idea of dividing the nation

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1. Sanford, E.B. The Origin and History of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. pp. 271-272.
 2. cf. Constitution of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. Report of 1908. pp. 80.

into districts as a basis for the establishment of local centers proved to be inadvisable and was abandoned.¹ A number of local groups were successfully organized, among them the federations formed in Chicago, Portland, (Maine) Philadelphia, St. Louis, Baltimore, Boston, Columbus and Louisville.² The most important development of this period was the perfecting of the machinery within the organization itself. New commissions were added as the limited funds permitted, the work of each department was more clearly determined and effective methods of work developed.

1912-16

The second phase, 1912-16, witnesses the extension of the external work of the organization. The effort to found branches of a closely determined pattern was abandoned, and emphasis was centered on the establishment of more scattered organizations, generally of smaller cities than those covered by the preceding period.³ The development of suitable local programs was stimulated by a survey made of community needs and the establishment of the departmental extension method.⁴ "Among the most significant matters set forth by the report are the remarkably rapid and providential developments of our international relationships, the systematic progress of our commission on federated movements for the development of much neglected social communities, the closer association

1. cf. Cavert, S.M. Twenty Years of Church Federation. pp. 31.
2. cf. Douglas, H. Paul, Protestant Cooperation in American Cities. pp. 49.
3. cf. Douglas. Protestant Cooperation in American Cities. pp. 49.
4. Cavert, Twenty Years of Church Federation. pp. 31.

of our great inter-denominational organizations and the promise of more progress in the direction of adequate religious publicity."¹

"Last of all, a work which cannot be set forth in figures or words, the use of the federal council and its national office in the interest of great movements which need to reach and have a right to reach the Churches."²

1916-20

The third phase (1916-20) taxed the strength and capacity of the council. It was to this body that the government turned for religious aid, particularly in the provision of Chaplains for the armed forces. Contrary to expectations, a rapid expansion of the organization began. Numerous war councils were formed. Nearly one-third of the present existing federations date from the period 1918-20. The federation became very closely allied with the Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association, the Red Cross movement, and other such agencies. This body really was looked upon as the head of all the wartime welfare organizations, and its records favorably commend this reputation.³

1920-24

The following four years (1920-24) marked a revival of the promotion of federation work among the smaller churches. A number of new

1. Macfarland, The Churches of Christ in Council. Quadrennial Report of 1916.
2. Macfarland, The Churches of Christ in Council. Quadrennial Report of 1916. pp. 240.
3. cf. Douglas. Protestant Cooperation in American Cities. pp. 49, Cavert, Twenty Years of Christian Federation. pp. 31.

commissions were created to meet the demands of the Churches. The Committee of Race Relations, the Ecumenical Council Committee, the Department of Research and Education number among the major additions.¹ The Universal Christian Conference held at Stockholm and the World Inter-Church Movement were both indebted to the Federal Council for its promotive work in their behalf. This period saw the shift of emphasis toward Evangelical and social service work.

On April 12, 1924, the Federal Council was incorporated. The purposes as given in the act of corporation are: "The objects of said corporation shall be to promote the spirit of fellowship, service and cooperation among the Churches of Christ in America, to secure larger efficiency in their work, to endeavor to prevent their duplication of effort and expenditure, and to increase their influence by united action in every department of their operations, at home and abroad."²

1924-28

The sixth quadrennial period (1924-28) has been marked by a change in personnel and machinery by which the federation promotes local organizations. This period saw very few new federations organized. The emphasis was placed on the development of those already in existence and adequate preparation for future organizing work.

Progress has been selective rather than inclusive. The movement has experienced many failures in the lapse and extinction of federations. As reported in 1929, the official list of federations was six

1. cf. Cavert. United in Service. Quadrennial Report of 1924. pp. 125-163. Summary Statement 11-13.
2. Cavert. United in Service. Quadrennial Report of 1924. pp. 343.

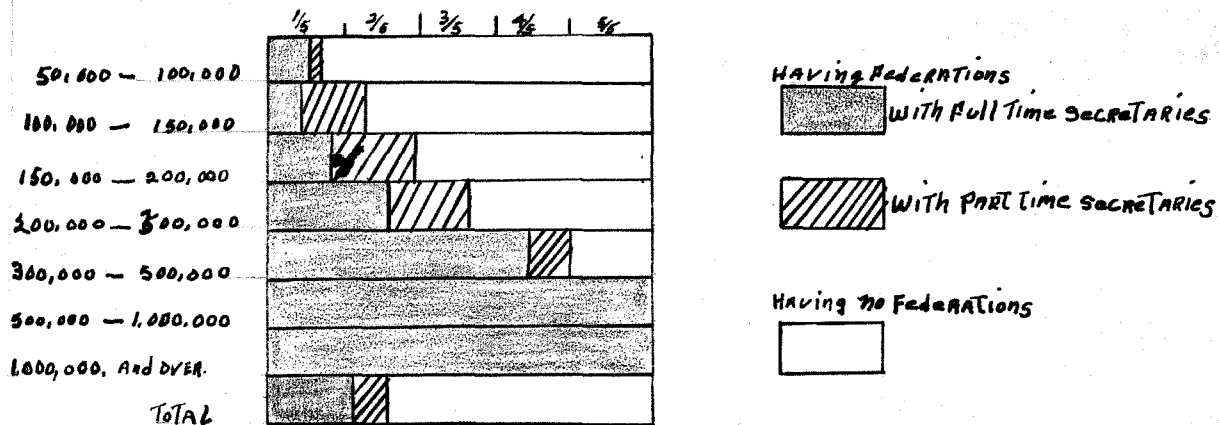
State Federations, with 43 city organizations employing full or part time paid leadership. The following chart shows the distribution of cities.

DISTRIBUTION OF CHURCH FEDERATIONS BY SIZE OF CITIES

<u>Population</u>	<u>In U.S.</u>	<u>Having Fed.</u>	<u>With part-time sec. only</u>
50,000 to 100,000	60	6	1
100,000 to 150,000	31	5	3
150,000 to 200,000	13	5	3
200,000 to 300,000	10	5	2
300,000 to 500,000	10	8	1
500,000 to 1,000,000	9	9	0
1,000,000 and over	5	5	0
<u>Total</u>	138	43	10

"This distribution of city federations is distinctly regional. They are relatively most frequent in the cities of the north-central and western states, somewhat less frequent in the north-eastern states, and nearly absent from the southern and south-central group. Except for cities included in the larger metropolitan areas, the only city of over 300,000 population lacking a federation is New Orleans. Of cities of from 100,000 to 300,000 population, two-thirds of the north-central and western, and two-fifths of the north-eastern have federations; but this is true of only one of the eight southern cities of this size; and no smaller southern city has a federation."¹ The outstanding evidence of this table is that the proportion of cities in which there are federations very rapidly decreases with decreased size. All cities of over half a million have federations; nearly all cities of 300,000 have them. But less than half the cities from 150,000 to 300,000 population have federations, and a mere fraction of those below 150,000."²

Proportion of Cities of Given Populations Having Church Federations



1. Douglas. Protestant Cooperation in American Cities. pp. 4.

2. Ibid. pp. 3.

It is obvious from a study of the accompanying statistics that organized Protestant cooperation and unity as represented in the local establishment of federations is primarily found in the larger centers of population. However, it must be borne in mind that the activity of the Federal Council is not confined to the cities, and that in smaller centers voluntary groups of ministers and workers follow programs supplied by the Federal Council.

CHAPTER II

FORM AND STRUCTURE

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FORM AND STRUCTURE

It is obvious that any movement which intends to engage in active work must provide some form of organization capable of carrying forward its program. It is our purpose in this chapter to study the way in which Church Unity is being advanced by the formal structure which the federation movement has adopted.

In our investigation of the unifying elements, we begin with a consideration of the ideals around which the organization is centered.

SCRIPTURAL

The Federal Council of Churches movement, both in its national and local aspect, came as the result of the earnest work of a number of men who saw the need for some such organization among the Protestant Churches. These men were not basing their work on an acquired idealistic philosophy, but were firmly convinced from their study of the Scriptures that God intended the churches to work harmoniously and cooperatively together. Sanford says:

"Church unity in the spirit is an accomplished fact. Many things are drawing Christians together. They understand each other better. There is a community of thought, arising from reading the same books among preachers and laymen. The human sentiments have mitigated theological asperities. Creeds and church politics have converged and modified each other. Religion is seen not to lie in devisive speculation, but in unifying life. Christ has drawn all believers together as He has drawn them around Himself. The Scriptures being more universally studied instead of controversial questions, harmonize all faiths in their inclusive truths. The emphasis is on the experimental phase of religion, here all true Christians use the same idiom and dialectics disappear. The miracle of pentacost is reversed and all speak with one tongue."¹

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1. Sanford, Origin and History of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. Pp. 154.

Christ's last prayer that they might be one is full of the deepest meaning. The lesson was then taught that the disciples of Christ could differ in the serious matters of doctrine and in the chief modes of worship and yet be one in the communion of the Christian Church.¹

"On the last night when Jesus was with His disciples, the thing that He prayed for most was that they might be one. This was no ordinary occasion; it was a farewell gathering - a time when one has no thought for casual things, but only for what is nearest the heart. Unity is demanded first of all in order that the Church may not by its own example stand in the way of that life of fellowship for which the Church exists. For the Church is in its very genius a fellowship of those who share the purpose of Jesus and seek to fulfill it in the world. Its great aim, like its masters, is to build a world fellowship by making men conscious of their brotherhood to one another because of their common sonship to God."²

"This council has a high and holy mission in two directions of supreme importance. First of all to make the Gospel of Christ paramount in the thoughts of men. This council has another mission that is high and holy. Recognizing that in the past diverse opinions and secretarian policies have been a source of weakness, this is an auspicious hour for the church of Christ in its united life to secure a measure of spiritual authority that will hasten the day when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Christ in Lord to the Glory of God the Father."³

The idea that the federal organizations are essentially religious bodies, organized for religious purposes, based upon principles derived from the Scriptures, is current in all publications and reports published by them.

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2. A Handbook for Charter Associates, The Federal Council of Churches. (Pamphlet).
 1. cf. Church Federation, Interchurch Conference on Federation Report 1903. pp. 147.
 3. Macfarland, Federal Council Report of 1916-17. pp. 152.

THEORY

The principle underlying the organization was the conviction that the Churches should be bound together in a structure which would not infringe upon denominational sovereignty and at the same time permit the Churches to unite in carrying on their mutual work. Throughout its development, great care has been taken to safeguard denominational autonomy while perfecting a structure that would present a unified Protestant Church acting as one body in the promotion of certain activities.

The name chosen by the organization comes from the form which the movement has adopted, politically known as the federate plan. Clarence Atheran has described it as the juristic theory of interstate federation, and says:

"Just as individuals do not speak of giving up their independence when they sign a contract or form a partnership, neither do states abandon their sovereignty when they ratify a constitution. States exercise their free will in binding themselves to the terms of a constitution and make provision for changing conditions by the possibility of amendments. Inter-Church federation does not involve the surrender of denominational sovereignty any more than federal unity demands the surrender of the sovereignty of the states."¹

LOCAL COUNCILS

In our investigation of the form and structure of the organization we shall first study the local councils and proceed from them to a consideration of the larger groups, state and national.

As stated in a pamphlet published by the national body, a council of churches is the coordination of the religious forces of a city in the effort to make that city Christian. By a council of churches is meant

1. Athearn. Interchurch Government. pp. 202, 207.

the churches themselves as Churches consulting and cooperating together through accredited representatives for all accepted common tasks. It rests under no authority from any outside council, either state or national."¹ Another similar publication states, "as a matter of fact, no local branches of the federal council have been developed. The actual program has been to foster autonomous and self-governing local councils and federations, wholly responsible to the churches of their community."²

No one principle of the local associations is more specially emphasized than that of local autonomy. The Churches are expected to cooperate because they believe that the work done by the local federation is work they wish to support, and feel that it can best be done through the united efforts of a group of churches.

Bass makes this point very clear when he says:

"Church cooperation cannot realize in the organization any superior ecclesiastical authority. The only force is that force which comes from frequent discussion and consequent united opinion. A council of churches is an organization of the local churches themselves. It tries to do for them what a chamber of commerce does for business life. A local council is an autonomous body. It has no external relationship with other councils, state or national."³

This autonomy is invariably implied in the constitutional statement of objectives when it is not directly stated. The Youngstown statement as typical reads, "No provision of this constitution, or action taken by the governing board shall be interpreted as interfering with or limiting the action of any church or denomination."⁴ The Portland, Oregon, consti-

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1. A City Council of Churches, Why and How. (Pamphlet).
 2. Christian Unity. pp. 8. (Pamphlet).
 3. Bass, Protestantism in the United States. pp. 243.
 4. Youngstown Federal Council of Churches. Constitution.

tution has this provision: "The executive committee may sustain cooperative relationships with the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America and with a state council when and if so organized. It is also understood that the prior relationships of the council are not affected in any way."¹

ORGANIZATION

The usual means of organizing a council is the calling together of the local churches through congregational representatives. They formulate a constitution, etc. which, when accepted by their respective churches, is put into operation and the federation begins its work.

The representatives usually consist of the pastor and two or three lay members, with additional representatives for a specified number of church members beyond the first unit. There are variations of this form - Oakland and St. Louis do not recognize pastors as representatives. Some of the others have equal representation regardless of membership. Most of them make no discrimination between men and women as representatives.

Every federation is closely allied with some community. Naturally the council is an association of local churches that constitute a natural geographic group. Socially defined, it consists of a metropolitan center with its suburbs, the unity of which is now officially recognized by the United States census in its statistics of metropolitan districts.

In the practical definitions of their geographic fields, virtually all federations go beyond the limits of their respective cities.

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1. Portland, Oregon, Council of Churches Constitution. Art. VII.

"Most of them continually recognize the suburbs as within their jurisdiction. Three of them, Boston, New York, and St. Louis, specify the greater or metropolitan city in their titles. Four more, Cleveland, Louisville, Pittsburg, and Rochester, identify the county as the area of their responsibility. Nine more name themselves the federations of a city "and vicinity". Still others, that have failed to give constitutional recognition to the suburbs, have nevertheless undertaken formal responsibility for them through the method of compacts. Philadelphia, for example, has an agreement with the State Council of Churches whereby it undertakes to function in suburbs within the State of Pennsylvania."¹

The general tendency is to make their geographic areas correspond to the social factors of the metropolitan district in which they are located.

A great deal of attention is paid to the requirement for membership. In order that its purpose to unify the various Protestant Churches of the community into one group may not be defeated by its own action, no provision is made that would prevent them from joining the organization.

In general, the membership is restricted to the so-called Evangelical Churches. "Twelve out of twenty cases examined constitutionally limit their membership to Evangelical Churches. In ten, the work Evangelical was actually used; in two others the requirement was made by implication. In three others, membership was restricted to Protestant Churches. In the five remaining cases, those of Portland (Maine) Boston, Massachusetts, state, New York City and Rochester, no theological limitations were specified."² Typical of this last group is the Portland, Oregon, constitution which states, "the membership of this council shall include: those churches in Portland and vicinity that shall decide by vote to associate themselves with this organization and as shall be approved by the Executive Committee."³

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1. Douglas. Protestantism in American Cities. pp. 76.
2. Douglas. Protestantism Cooperation in American Cities. pp. 90.
3. Portland, Oregon, Council of Churches. Constitution. Article III.

While no definition has been made of the term evangelical by those councils which include it in their statements on membership, it has become quite a broad term through usage.

In trying to determine the unit of membership, we find the wide variety that comes with local autonomy. However, all of them come within two distinct types, the local churches, and the denominations as they are locally represented. Usually the federations are composed of the local Churches as individual units, which was the case in fifteen out of twenty federations examined. The remaining five were denominational associations as they were locally present, that is of such units as conferences, associations, presbyteries, etc.¹

Such cities as Detroit and Chicago, that are organized on the denominational plan, recognize the need for local church representation and arrange for yearly meetings for delegates from the individual congregations.²

Those federations composed of individual churches are often closely associated with their denominational unit as it is locally represented. In cities where district or regional offices are located, the relationship becomes somewhat complicated. In order to forestall any serious complications in those federations where it is not expressly stated that denominational officials are to be considered council members, such persons are granted membership on a secondary basis. Usually they are men of ability whom the council is willing to have on the staff. Thus they are very frequently placed on committees, governing boards, or given charge of a department.

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1. cf. A City Council of Churches. Why and How. (Pamphlet).
2. cf. United for Service. The Chicago Church Federation Constitution. Art. V. (Pamphlet).
Douglas. Protestantism Cooperation in American Cities. pp.78.

The problem of working unitedly with other religious and non-religious bodies having similar objectives is a factor with which every federation has to deal. To exhibit the unity and cooperative spirit continually advocated by most federations, demands that they definitely state their relationship to other organizations of a similar nature.

The solution testifies to the fact that one of the outstanding points of the structure is its capacity to gather up other interdenominational organizations into the larger unity of its more inclusive movement. The solution has been to absorb other movements into the federation structure when possible; in other cases to make them a department or a commission of the federation; in those instances when this could not be done, the two organizations existed as separate entities but worked together through a correlation of their programs.

The method of granting partial membership by means of giving a kindred organization the status of a department has been very satisfactorily used. The Portland Federation has made constitutional provision to include such bodies.¹ The Chicago Federation even goes so far as to define a department to "describe such organizations as may from time to time be included within the cooperative activities of the Chicago Church Federation."²

This system of granting membership not only allies other movements with the federation, but enlists the aid of churches not otherwise connected with the federation. Thus in Chicago, where the federation is com-
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1. cf. Portland, Oregon, Council of Churches. Constitution. Art. III.

2. United for Service Chicago Church Federation. pp. 25.

posed of denominational units, six denominations that belong to the Council of Religious Education do not belong to the federation. But the federation has so united its department of education with the council, and affords it such support, that they function very well together. Two other denominations are similarly connected with the federation; one belongs to the young people's department, the other to the women's department.¹ Likewise, as in the case of denomination officials, leading heads of kindred organizations are often asked to serve on a committee or to act in an advisory capacity.

The deliberate refusal of some denominations or churches to join with the federations creates another problem with which each federation has to deal. Usually their refusal is based upon historic antecedents alien to the central cooperating body, or they cherish some special doctrine of the church or ministry. This reluctance is overcome and unified group functioning obtained through the federation principle that non-members are cordially invited to cooperate with the federation in the promotion of special programs or the work of one department acceptable to them. Through the use of such special projects as evangelistic campaigns; prayer weeks; poor relief; seasonal activities placing emphasis upon Lenten services; Easter; Christmas, and Thanksgiving observances, these somewhat antagonistic groups are often brought to ally themselves with the federation. Thus they use their resources in behalf of federation functioning even though they do not care to be considered favorable to the federation as an organization.

Neither are all evangelistic churches sponsors of the federation

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 1. cf. Douglas. Protestant Cooperation in American Cities. pp. 99.

idea. This particularly applies to churches maintained for the use of certain races. Negro, Chinese and non-English speaking congregations are very seldom allied with the federations. This is in part due to their own reluctance to unite. However, special committees on race relations keep in contact with such groups rendering aid whenever possible.

The leading units, whether as congregations or denominations, that compose the membership as the habitual major cooperating bodies are the Baptists, Congregationalists, Disciples, Methodists, and Presbyterians. The fact that these larger denominations work together, often brings the most influential groups in to federation activities, setting a precedent which smaller groups are prone to follow. This group, coupled with those associations which have membership on a secondary basis, makes the federations organizations important factors in those centers where they have been fully developed.

Dr. Douglas has made this summary statement relative to the principle of federation membership:

"It is intended in principle to include as cooperators, organizations of whatever form religion has assumed in the modern city, or else to absorb them into itself. Ecclesiastical forms have numbers, anti-
quity, and prestige behind them. They moreover show no disposition to be absorbed. This compels the movement to make them structurally basic, and generally leaves others (and absorbable) types of organizations to find membership on a secondary basis. But it does admit these other types in a backhand way when it can not do so straightforwardly."¹

ADMINISTRATION

Any organization intending to carry an extensive, active program must provide adequate machinery with which to work. In order to suc-
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1. Douglas. Protestant Cooperation in American Cities. pp. 81.

cessfully push forward its objectives, and at the same time safeguard the individual interests of each church or denomination, a general type of administrative machinery has been developed by the local congregations. Here, as in other phases, the form varies with constituency of the local group. But the general principles are found to be in use among all federations.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The body which determines the general policy of the federation is usually known as the board of directors. This board is a set of unpaid officers installed at the annual meeting of the delegates, who have been given the operating authority and responsibility for the federation's activities. The New York City Constitution states:

"The control and conduct of the business of the federation shall be vested in a board of directors, who shall be elected by the voting members from among the entire membership of the corporation. The board of directors shall have the power to make and amend by-laws for the federation and for its own government in accordance with this constitution."¹

The Philadelphia federation provides for a council which shall in turn elect the board of directors. The constitution reads: "The control of the federation shall be vested in a council. The board of directors shall be composed of sixty-three members elected by the council at its first meeting. The Board of directors shall be responsible for the policies and administration of the federation subject to the review and approval of the Council."²

The Portland (Oregon) federation provides for a board of trustees.

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1. New York City Federation Constitution. Article IV.
 2. Philadelphia. Federation of Churches. Constitution. Article IV.

"The affairs of said corporation shall be managed by a board of twelve trustees."¹

Provision is usually made to include the President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary of the federation as members of this board. The majority of constitutions also make it possible for any denominational executive residing in the city, whose denomination is a member of the federation, to be eligible for service on the governing body.

The numerical strength of this body differs according to the size and attitude of the local group.

The personnel of the Board is so chosen as to evenly distribute the representation among the several denominations. Some of the constitutions expressly state that a certain percentage of the total number shall be elected from each denomination represented.²

The primary function of the directors is to supervise the general program of the federation. The responsibility of providing paid workers and arranging for the necessary committees and commissions is usually left to them.

A number of the federations make a secondary delegation of administrative authority to executive committees. Its members are generally drawn from the permanent officers of the organization, with a few members at large. The New York City constitution reads: "This committee shall include the chairman of all standing committees and such other directors as the board may see fit to elect. Duties and powers. To transact such business as may be delegated to it by the Board of Directors and to act for the Federation between meetings of the board."³

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1. Portland, Oregon, Council of Churches. Constitution. Article V.
2. cf. Philadelphia. Art. IV. Portland. Art. V.
3. The Greater New York Federation of Churches. Constitution. Art. V.

The Portland (Oregon) body provides for a committee composed of "the board of trustees, twelve members at large, and the officers of the council, chairmen of departments, and the presidents of such denominational bodies within the city as shall have at least two churches cooperating with the council."¹

It is the intended function of this committee to carry on the executive functions of the organization, which will be responsible for the direct supervision of the federation's program. Being a smaller body, it is more accessible and can function more smoothly in matters of detailed routine.

STANDING COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS

The daily administrative routine is carried on through the channel provided by permanent committees and commissions. Each committee is responsible for the particular department delegated to it. Each receives the report and supervises the work of any paid secretaries operating under its authority.

A great degree of freedom is allowed each committee on the assumption that it is capable of doing its own constructive thinking and is in close touch with the work of other committees.

The following chart outlines the type of committee found in the course of an intensive study of twenty-three federations, which are typical of the whole group.²

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1. Portland, Oregon, Council of Churches. Constitution. Article VII.
2. Douglas. Protestant Cooperation in American Cities. Pp. 105.

DEPARTMENTS, STANDING COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS
IN CHURCH FEDERATIONS

I. Type of Service Activity	Number of Federations Having
Evangelism and Religious Work	25
Comity	22
Religious Education	22
Social Service	19
International Relations	18
Interracial Relations	13
Political Action, Legislation or Law Enforcement.	12
Industrial Relations	6
Court Hospital or Other Institutions.	5
Missions.	3
Radio	3
Rural or County Affairs	3
Moral Reform.	2
Sabbath Observance.	2
II. Means of Advocacy and Support	
Finance.	13
Publicity.	12
III. Age or Sex Departmentalization	
Women's Department	12
Young People's Department.	8

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1. Douglas. Protestant Cooperation in American Cities. pp. 105.

The outstanding committees are seen to be those on Evangelism, Community, Religious Education, Social Service, Inter-racial and International Relations. Very often two committees are combined into one department such as the Women's and Young People's Committee, the Inter-racial and International Committees. In some instances such committees as the International do very little active functioning, while all federations that are at all active concentrate their strength in the extension of the first four listed.

PAID STAFF

Each federation which has the finances employs a number of professional agents to carry out the programs of each department. This system eliminates the discension likely to arise from the use of untrained volunteer departmental heads, which would of course destroy the unity of the group.

When possible, a secretary is placed in charge of each department and is expected to give it his full time and attention. In those instances where it is not possible to provide departmental secretaries a general secretary is employed to correlate the work of all departments. Others find it more advisable to employ part time secretaries to carry on the technical work of the organization.

The extent of the staff varies according to the size and financial condition of the local bodies. Wherever possible, assistant secretaries and an adequate clerical staff have been employed.

The responsibility of providing workable programs rests primarily with the secretaries. They are expected to devise specific plans and techniques for the performance of the work assigned to them.

The paid staff may be classified under three heads: the general secretaries, the clerical employees, and the religious and social workers. The duties of each are in part determined by the size of the organization and the community in which it functions.

FINANCES

The sources of income are limited. Constitutional provision is usually made to arrange for appropriations from each of the member units. This source is always uncertain due to the constant change in church budgets. The rest of the necessary funds is derived from popular subscription or such money-making projects as the financial committees arrange. In several instances individuals interested in some phase of the federation's work have endowed departments.

The extension secretary's report for 1930 listed the budget of forty-six federations. Their income ranged from \$600 to \$132,000, the median being \$13,500.¹

The preceding has been characteristic of those federations large enough and having sufficient funds to engage in the planned activities.

There is a large number of communities too small to be financially capable of supporting any extensive federation organization. If there is any form of federal organization, all leadership is voluntary and the program is quite limited. In those in which no such group is organized, the ministers association carries on as best it can all cooperative activities.

STATE ORGANIZATIONS

One of the objectives of the federation movement has been to so unite the forces of the Protestant Churches that adequate religious

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1. Official Report compiled by Dr. Moore, Extension Secretary for the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

and social facilities will be provided in those communities which cannot provide their own. It was at first planned to work through district organizations, but this plan was found to be unfavorable and was abandoned. At the present, renewed effort is being extended to promote state organizations. However, the work has so lagged that only seven such associations are in actual operation.¹

The internal structure and organization is practically the same as that used by the local federations.

The purpose of such state federations is expressed in a bulletin published by the national organization. "To touch and include the most isolated hamlet and congregation and to enrich farm life as well as factory and tenement. Moreover some such agency must hold city and country together, manufacturing, commercial and educational communities, unacquainted if not mutually jealous, and give reality to that prophetic term which the Pilgrims brought - the commonwealth."²

The Church Council News Letter for June 1930, the official publication of the national organization, carried the following report:

"The present emphasis which the Federal Council is giving to the organization of state Councils of Churches led to a request that we define our aims in this respect. The Federal Council of Churches in helping to develop state councils (or federations of churches) is seeking to provide effective instruments through which the Churches of a state may carry on their cooperative service, to undertake directly such programs of interchurch cooperation as are in accord with their normal functions, and to organize and assist councils of churches in cities and counties throughout the state for the purpose of dealing more effectively with their own community problems.

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1. Reports submitted to the annual meeting of the Executive Committee, Dec. 2, 1930. Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.
 2. Nation Wide Extension in the State and Local Field. pp. 11. (pamphlet).

"Where any of these functions are being performed by already existing organizations, the aim to develop such helpful relationship as will make the united service of the churches more effective.

"A state council of churches is composed of the representatives of ecclesiastical organizations of the state and is directly responsible to them, therefore the final decision as to what shall be the form of organization, the relationships and programs rests ultimately with the state ecclesiastical organizations."¹

The most effective and active of the state federations is that of Massachusetts. The organization is composed of some two thousand churches, and lists its accomplishments under four heads:

1. Overcoming over-lapping. It has listed some fifty-four multi-denomination churches, thirty-two Union Churches, and a number of denominational mergers.

2. Voicing United Christian Opinion. Acting for the churches in promoting Christian citizenship, and in legislative action, law enforcement, etc., where morality or humanity are involved.

3. Organizing local cooperation. It lays claims to more self-directed federations than any other four States.

4. Bettering the work of the churches themselves. Religious education, Evangelistic programs, spreading Christian prop^oganda, etc.²

The development of these state organizations has been slow, and material is not available to permit an adequate evaluation of this branch of the federal group as a whole.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

The national organization of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America functions primarily through two organized groups, its governing bodies and ten special commissions.

1. Governing Bodies. The federal council proper is composed of about four hundred voting members duly appointed by the denominations they represent, meeting every four years.

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1. Church Council News Letter. June 1930.

2. cf. Kansas Council of Churches (pamphlet). The Illinois Council of Churches. Plan, Prodedure, Personnel. (pamphlet)

The general program is placed in the hands of an executive committee of some one hundred and twenty-five members meeting annually. The active directing agency is the administrative committee composed of sixty members meeting monthly.

2. Commissions. Similar to the plan which is used by the local bodies, commissions dealing with the actual work of the organization in its detailed activity have been established. The most important commissions are: Evangelism, International Justice and Goodwill, Relations with Churches of other Lands, Church and Race Relations, Social Service, Christian Education and Research, State and Local Extension.¹

The basis of organization in the State and local field, whether it be denominational or by church congregations, is optional. But the national body is definitely an organization of denominations as they are nationally represented. In all its activities the national federation is working in behalf of the local churches through the ecclesiastical unit of which they are a member.

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 1. Reports submitted to the Annual Meeting of the Executive Committee,
 Dec. 2-3, 1930.

cf. Handbook for Charter Associates. Pamphlet. pp. 5.

SUMMARY

This chapter has dealt with the practical form which the federation movement has adopted to carry on the program it has proposed to develop. A number of points exhibiting the unifying element to be found have emerged during the course of our investigation. Those of primary importance are:

1. The structure of the movement has been so designed as to allow each local group to operate as an autonomous body.
2. The governing boards and committees have been so constitutionally qualified that no one church or denomination will control the organization.
3. The committee and departmental system has been chosen to provide a way in which kindred organizations may be harmoniously related to the federation program.
4. The State federations have been advocated and organized with a view to include the smaller communities with the movement locally and to provide a means to work among them.
5. The national body speaks for the Churches as a whole through their denominations in matters of national importance.
6. Adequate professional leadership is provided to carry on the duties of the federation that call for trained technical leadership.

The great underlying principle has been to perfect an organization that will permit the churches to retain their individual existence and programs while at the same time working together with other churches in the promotion of work that can best be done and only done through the action of a large cooperating Christian organization.

CHAPTER III

UNITY THROUGH COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES

CHAPTER III

UNITY THROUGH COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES

The preceding chapters were given over to a consideration of the background out of which the federation movement came, its underlying principles, and the organization effected to carry forward the work it has set out to do. The next step in the unifying function of the movement is a study of the activities operated under the auspices of the local federations and the national organization.

There are a number of current needs that no one church alone can meet. If they are to be successfully dealt with, the whole Protestant Church must act together. The federation movement is the meeting ground for all churches to unite their resources in the promotion of those activities which are vital to every denomination.

Churches, like other organizations, cooperate only when they are convinced that they can more easily and successfully promote the projects in which they are interested, through united action, than through their own individual programs. In the great fields of Evangelism, Social Service, Religious Education, Comity, and the relation of the American churches to those of other lands and races, the federation movement has presented a program of work which has been quite enthusiastically followed by the churches composing its membership.

EVANGELISM

United action carries a more compelling evangelistic quality than solitary denominational action. The only thing that any church has that is worth converting anyone to is not the exclusive property of any one church but belongs to the others as well. When the Churches act

together, the minor points of denominational emphasis pass away, and they testify to the great realities of the Christian Faith; one God and Father, one Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and one way of life.

As defined by the national organization, The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America:

"A commission on evangelism is a central agency for deepening the spiritual life in all churches and by cooperative activities winning larger numbers to Christian discipleship and membership in the Christian Church."¹

This activity divides itself into two types of services: those which continue throughout the year, and those of a seasonal character. Any such program calls for careful planning, and every federation studied maintains a commission or committee on evangelism. Each local federation plans its own program, but there is very little difference in the general form and method followed.

Continual Activities

The outstanding continual function which is carried on by the federations is the broadcasting of daily and weekly religious services. The intention has been to bring the pastoral minister as well as the message of the pulpit before the radio audience. City Federations that have the facilities broadcast sermons, series of questions and answers dealing with religious subjects, and devotional song services. Another type of broadcast is the good cheer hour in which the keynote is to spread the atmosphere of Christian fellowship.

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1. A Handbook for Charter Associates. Federal Council. pp. 4
(pamphlet).

Under the auspices of the national council during 1929, two hundred and sixty-eight clergymen representing twenty different denominations, drawn from forty-nine cities, officiated in five hundred and thirty-one religious services conducted over a system of national hookups that involved the use of seventy radio stations.¹

Over fifty thousand letters received from all parts of America revealed that the religious message preached without denominational consciousness was breaking down the secretarian spirit, preparing the way for a greater period of Christian cooperation.²

No one church or denomination is able to maintain such an extensive program. It has neither the finances nor the men qualified for such work. The broadcasting companies are willing to cooperate with one movement, speaking for all the churches in their Gospel message, but they are not so cordial toward any one particular church or denomination.

The churches have come to realize the great opportunity which the radio provides for the spread of the Christian message, and they are willing to pool their resources and preachers with others, through the federations, in using this new agency.

The response of the various ministers to use their talent in radio preaching is reflective of the spirit to join with fellow-workers that is demonstrated through federation functioning.

Another very important phase of the continual work is the ministry carried on in penal and charitable institutions. The usual pro-

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1. Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. Annual Report of 1929. pp. 80.

2. Ibid.

gram calls for formal services and a great deal of personal visitation. In places where paid chaplains are not supplied, the local federations arrange some system of volunteer work whereby the services to be rendered are divided among the member units.

The Toledo federation furnished some nine hundred services to the jails, hospitals, and old people's homes of the community during the course of the year's activity.¹ Other federations are engaged in projects of a similar nature. Through such constructive programs the smaller churches are able to make a contribution, however small, and see that contribution used with the resources of others in extending the Gospel for which they exist.

Seasonal Activities

A number of the federations plan their evangelistic work on a yearly schedule, so arranging their program that a continual evangelistic endeavor will be in operation, but periodically intensified. One of the recent focal points was the effort to direct nationwide attention to the observance of the nineteenth hundred anniversary of Pentecost.

The most intensive seasonal activity is that carried on during the Lenten period culminating in the Easter services. In the larger cities noonday services are held in well located churches and theatres. Special evening meetings are prominent events in the church calendars, where special speakers address the congregations.

In the smaller cities such speakers could not be provided by any one church, and it is often the case that the congregation is too small
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1. cf. Report submitted to the annual meeting of the Executive Committee. Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. pp. 11.

to warrant such procedure. But the churches working together are able to obtain such men and bring them before the combined membership of the churches. In some instances the larger federations and the national council provide special programs for nearby communities.

Summer services, particularly outdoor meetings, are one of the major forms of evangelistic endeavor. The New York Federation in cooperation with the Marble Collegiate Church uses two hundred speakers annually and covers sixty different centers rendering this type of service.¹

Brooklyn has twenty-one such speakers, and a number of accompanying musicians likewise engaged.²

The Boston Federation has its famous church on wheels, besides the services held on the historic commons where three volunteer preachers conduct services every Sunday and four each Tuesday.

St. Louis has maintained extensive summer services for sixteen years, and the last annual report stated that some forty-three thousand people were in attendance.³

One of the more recent activities is the house to house visitation project. Every home in the community is visited to determine the religious affiliations of the populace and to extend them an invitation to attend the services of their own denomination or one of their own choosing when no preference is given.

During the vacation period when a number of ministers are often out of the city, the federation staff is always available to officiate

1. cf. Douglas. Protestant Cooperation in American Cities. pp. 354.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid. 335.

at funerals, weddings and such functions where the services of the clergy are desired.

Through the offices of the federation, plans are made to observe the Christmas season and provide suitable services. Likewise, united effort is directed to provide for Memorial Day, Thanksgiving, and those special events recognized by all the Protestant Churches.

The federations promote their evangelistic work on the assumption that they are promoting an activity in which all the Protestant Churches of the community are vitally interested. The projects are so planned that no two churches are competing but are so correlating their work that each is aiding the other, through a definitely planned program. The work is so planned that no one section of the city is supplied with an over-abundance of service while another is neglected. The churches unite in so distributing their evangelistic activities that the community as a whole may benefit from such work and each church may achieve results that would not be obtained if each church worked by itself. The unifying element of such procedure is being demonstrated by the willingness of the churches to cooperate and the enthusiasm with which they are receiving and using the suggestions given.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The educational function of the Church is one of the forms of activity that has experienced a rebirth. Church leaders have stressed the need for a curriculum that would unify the work done by the various organizations such as the Boy Scouts, Campfire Girls, Young People's Societies, Sunday Schools, Week Day Schools, Vacation Bible Schools, and others interested in the development of Christian character. There has been a great need for the reorganization of the whole field of religious

education in order to bring the standards of the church up to a level of the secular schools.

It is obvious that if the Protestant Churches are to promote any form of adequate religious instruction they must work together themselves and cooperate with other educational agencies. The providing of a program of week day religious instruction calls for a correlation between the program of the public school and that of the church. Separate programs cannot be arranged with each denomination. There must be some one body capable of adequately representing the churches of the community. The federations have satisfactorily served in such a capacity.

No one department of the federation movement has received more attention than that of Christian education. The federations have placed their most capable men on this commission in order to obtain the best results. The education of parents as well as children has been advocated in order to provide wholesome, uplifting home influences as aids in the child's spiritual growth. In this regard the Greater New York Federation reports the enrollment of two hundred and thirteen parents in special classes in a project in which fifty churches were represented.¹

The national organization has been primarily interested in making surveys, studying the technical reports of other agencies in an effort to bring the inadequacy of the educational programs found in the majority of churches before the Protestant Churches as a whole. The National Council has made special effort to correlate the work done by other agencies in this field in their endeavor to increase the effectiveness of

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1. Upholding the Churches in the City's Life. The Greater New York Federation of Churches. (pamphlet).

religious educational programs. This body has allied itself with the National Council of Religious Education, and has cooperated to the fullest extent to improve and standardize the educational function of the churches. The results of experiments and investigations have been placed before the denominational boards in order to help them improve the content of their material and the methods of instruction.

In formulating educational projects, emphasis has been placed upon urgent social issues, the relation of the sexes, race relations, peace and war, temperance, etc., in connection with the development of religious instruction.

The work of the federations carried on through their religious education department may be grouped under four heads.

1. Training vacation school workers.
2. Training full time church workers.
3. Conducting vacation schools.
4. General improvement of methods of instruction.

The federations have no authority by which they can change the program of any church school. They communicate their ideas through the maintenance of bureaus of information and the promulgation of advice relating to educational subjects. Competent educational instructors are employed who are qualified to give advice and aid to church leaders. Suitable materials and a library are provided for public use, by many of the larger federations.

Conferences are called from time to time, to which those interested in religious education are invited to attend. Here recognized authorities are met and group action is brought to bear on the problems that

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face the religious instructor.

One of the problems that faces most of the churches is the lack of trained leaders to conduct their educational work, especially those churches dependent upon volunteer leadership. In a number of instances the federations have been the only agency able to meet this difficulty. The individual churches were not equipped to conduct any kind of leadership training schools. Through their combined efforts it was possible to provide the necessary teacher training courses.

The church schools are denominationally supervised, and the program is usually centered around denominational training. Very little direct contact with the school itself is allowed the federation, but the church worker is very often trained by the federation. Leadership training is the primary purpose, and is provided through a system of holding classes at centrally located points. The churches have come to realize that the Methodist and the Baptist Sunday School teacher require the same kind of training. And they learn in the federation schools to cooperate and assist one another in their function as directors of the religious education of the children of their community.

The magnitude of this training may be seen from the following figures taken from city federation reports:¹

<u>City</u>	<u>Training School Enrollment</u>
Youngstown	114
Minneapolis	249
Wichita	269
Detroit	446
Chicago	1208
New York	1729

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The Protestant Churches working unitedly in behalf of a unified system of religious education are able to provide leadership training schools that no one church can possibly maintain.

The New York City Federation reports that a plan has been put into effect to reach the seven hundred thousand children who receive no religious instruction. At the writing of this report there were three hundred and twenty week-day church schools listed, attended by thirty thousand children. They were characterized as having "worth while religious educational programs".¹

The value of the federations as a means of providing an organization through which the churches may cooperate has been demonstrated by the effective programs of daily vacation schools conducted throughout the country. It is a purely interdenominational function carried on under the auspices of the federations.

The general practice has been to train as many volunteer leaders as possible, and place them under a capable supervisor who acts as director of the school. These schools are held at various focal points, and all the churches within that district unite in sending their pupils to the one school. Such a procedure reduces the individual church cost and provides a type of instruction superior to that which would be furnished by the average church if it had any such activity at all. These schools usually last from five to six weeks. They have become fairly well established as a cooperative function of Protestantism in the larger cities. The following statistics were taken from the extensive survey made by Dr. Douglas covering this point.²

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1. Upholding the Churches in the City's Life. Greater New York Federation of Churches. (pamphlet);
 2. cf. Douglas. Protestant Cooperation in American Cities. pp. 351.

<u>City Population</u>	<u>Number of Schools</u>	<u>Number of Pupils</u>
75,000 to 150,000	10 to 12	1,000 to 1,500
350,000 to 500,000	50 to 60	3,300 to 5,000

Chicago reported 225 schools; 3,400 teachers, 22,000 pupils.
New York reported 275 schools; with 25,000 pupils.

In answer to a questionnaire, seventy-three per cent. of the constituents of fifteen federations judged this activity to be of the greatest importance. This evaluation is looked upon by the federation movement as a sign reflecting the importance of a federation to the community in which it is located.

Much of the educational work of the federations has been experimental. Serving in this capacity the federations have been able to carry on projects that the individual churches could not possibly engage in. It has also enabled the churches to use the best selective material published by all of the denominational boards. Acting as a leader in this field, the federations have been able to bring before the churches the best results of extensive research work along this line conducted by other cooperating agencies. In making the educational function of the church a constructive community project, the churches have begun to realize the necessity of unified action. In the majority of cases they have used the local federation as the medium through which they could unite to render the greatest service and obtain the best results from cooperative thinking and planning.

RESEARCH AND INFORMATION

If the Christian Church is to take an active part in the moral and social life of the community and the nation, a knowledge of moral and social conditions as they exist is imperative. In all cases where such knowledge is needed, it is necessary that it be accurate and based

upon sound research. The needs of all churches in this regard are the same, and the collection of such information cannot be done by one group working alone. The federation movement has established a reputation of reliability for its published information dealing with material which is considered to be of value to the churches.

The majority of federations maintain a bureau of research for information purposes, in connection with their other activities. The purpose of this department is to furnish the churches with reliable information, covering the economic, social and religious conditions of the community. It is intended to be a source of fruitful information to the busy pastor and church worker.

In a number of instances the federations have become a source of public information, particularly in regard to directing people to reliable sources of medical attention, public institutions of all kinds, etc.

The local department is not intended to be a research bureau, but serves as an important office in compiling the work of specialized agencies in such a way that it can be understood and used by the churches.

The national organization acts in a similar capacity, and has defined this department "as a central bureau of Protestantism in securing and publishing the factual information necessary for the adequate understanding of issues in which Christian people have a vital interest."¹ Through the work of a trained staff it secures and publishes information needed for intelligent dealing with religious and social problems.²

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1. A Handbook for Charter Associates. Federal Council. pp. 11 (pamphlet).
2. Cavert, Twenty Years of Church Federation. pp. 83. (pamphlet).

In bringing before the churches conditions as they exist in the community or nation, the federations have brought them to see the necessity for unified activity to remedy such conditions that are detrimental to the community or nation and working counter to the principles of Christ.

SOCIAL SERVICE

The federations realize that the foremost objective of the Protestant Churches is to preach the gospel. They also believe that they have a ministry of service and should put their Gospel into active use by ministering to all the needs of mankind. Thus they have come to place emphasis upon the social message of the church. In terms of federal thinking, the church should be one of the progressive institutions of the community and have a constructive interest in community welfare programs.

In a number of instances the social and evangelistic work of the federation go together. In their hospital, juvenile delinquency, and institutional work, the ideal is to render religious service through a social approach.

The term social service covers a number of varied activities as it is applied in federation circles. The general use of the term designates the activities of the federations in the moral and social field apart from the distinctly religious function of the church.

It is not the purpose of any federation to organize a social relief or charitable agency. Its practice has been to foster the application of Christian principles through cooperative work with specialized social agencies which are in active operation. As each church takes care of the social needs of its own members the federation acts

as an advisory body, particularly as it urges the local church to maintain the high standards and effective methods which the more progressive and successful social bodies advocate.

The federations fill an important place in every city as they stand as representatives of the churches. Any movement or agency which wishes to enlist the approval or aid of the churches finds it difficult to approach each denomination or church separately. It is much more satisfactory and is more sure of merited sanction or disapproval if there is a central body capable of rendering a report based upon a sound investigation.

One of the forms which the social work of the federation has taken is its promotion of legislative action in behalf of moral and social reform. The group attention is focused on some particular subject such as child labor, health, wage laws, old age insurance, and the maintenance of state institutions. The Chicago federation has a committee on political action which embraces crime, gambling, motion picture censorship, and the like. It also has a committee dealing with public institutions, and one on social and civic relationships.¹

The Detroit department of public affairs embraces public demonstrations, federal law enforcement, cause and cure of unemployment, police censorship, political questions and candidates for office.²

The Massachusetts State Federation has a program of citizenship advancement to encourage and instruct people in the intelligent use of their privilege to vote. This work has been centered in the foreign residents of the State.³

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1. cf. United for Service, Chicago Church Federation. pp.13,14,17.
(pamphlet)

2. cf. The Detroit Council of the Churches of Christ. Annual Report for 1930. pp. 5.

3. cf. Facts and Factors. Massachusetts State Federation of Churches. pp. 4, 5. (pamphlet)

The New York City Federation "has given attention to social welfare problems such as securing parks and playgrounds, better law enforcement, campaigns against gambling, speakeasies, and evil motion pictures."¹

In all such cases the idea is not to make a political organization out of the churches but to bring Protestant Church members to substantiate efforts in behalf of proper social adjustments, law enforcement and honest civic government.

Several industrial and labor bodies have asked the churches to define their position in relation to pressing industrial problems. The local federations have not considered it their place to make any extensive statement regarding such problems, and have left most of this work to the national organization.

The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ has made several investigations in this field, and has taken its stand in the light of its findings. The purpose of this work has been to apply Christian principles in the industrial realm.

The general practice of the industrial commission is to arrange for a series of conferences with industrial leaders and churchmen to consider current difficulties.

In 1923 it was joined by the National Catholic Welfare Conference and the Central Conference of American Rabbis in a protest against the twelve-hour day in the steel industry.²

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1. Upholding the Churches in the City's Life. Greater New York Federation of Churches. (pamphlet).

2. cf. United in Service. Quadrennial Report of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. 1920-4. pp. 116.

Since that time "several projects have been undertaken in co-operation with the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference and the Social Justice Commission of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. These projects have demonstrated in an impressive way the possibility of working constructively with non-Protestant groups in the area of the practical application of religion to social situations, where doctrinal questions are not involved."¹

The basic principle of the whole federation movement has revealed itself here, in the cooperative work of three extremely different religious forces. Unity of action in the promotion of Christian service by the churches regardless of polity or theology.

One of the significant undertakings of the year was the relief work done among the textile workers of Marion, North Carolina. Sixteen thousand dollars was raised by subscription in addition to large quantities of clothing. Both were turned over to the American Friends Committee to use in their non-partisan aid to the destitute families.²

Very creditable work has been done by the committee on mercy and relief in answer to the appeal for the famine of relief in China. The total amount forwarded to China thus far is \$1,301,800. The National Christian Council of China has accepted the responsibility of administering this fund.³

The social service of the local federations has been primarily limited to work with individuals. The aim has been to make contacts with the so-called borderline cases, people who are slipping but who have not fallen into the hands of the charitable institutions or the courts. These individuals are refitted, through tactful attention, for a life of usefulness in the community.

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1. cf. The Handbook of the Churches, Edited by Charles Stelze. pp.33.

2. cf. Report submitted to the annual meeting of the Executive Committee, 1930. pp. 20, 21. Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

3. cf. Ibid. pp. 41.

The social ministry of the church is varied. The local federation acts as the agency through which the churches may unite and so plan their social activities that all the churches of a community may concentrate their efforts in the promotion of a definite, well formulated program. The failure of individual spasmodic effort to adequately minister to the social needs of their constituency has induced the churches to work cooperatively with other organizations in a united effort to institute a constructive program of social betterment. To defend the right of the church to have a voice in the moral and social field demands that the church as a whole exhibit some constructive program. The social work of the federation movement has shown what can be done through joint action, and its well developed ministry has forced the Protestant Churches to acknowledge the value of cooperative social activity. At the same time the results of such activity have brought recognition of the place the church holds in constructive social advancement.

COMITY

No more pressing problem than the inefficient distribution of religious forces confronts the Protestant Church world. There are a number of areas sadly underchurched, but at the same time there are a number of localities overchurched. The twin evils of Protestantism overlapping and overlooking demand attention, and a redistribution of the churches can only be secured by systematic cooperative arrangements.

It is the purpose of the comity commission of every federation to take care of such matters as have to do with the relocation of churches, the organization of new Churches, mergers, splits in local

congregation, transfer of churches from one denomination to another, etc. In a number of instances inter-denominational comity committees have preceded the establishment of a federation due to the necessity for some body that could handle interchurch and interdenominational affairs.

Churches not members of the federations have shown a desire to participate in comity matters, realizing the necessity and value of cooperating with other churches and denominations in the location and organization of churches.¹

The Chicago Federation has stated the activity of this committee to be:

"By conference and advice, to aid in the distribution of the churches and similar institutions over the area covered by the Chicago-Church Federation, in such a way that each shall have a reasonable opportunity for growth and development and that no community shall be overchurched and none left without adequate church facilities."²

The California State Comity Commission, composed of the denominational superintendents, follows the Chicago statement of purpose verbatim.³

No one activity of the federation movement has been more heartily endorsed by denominational leaders and outstanding churchmen than that of the comity department. The more progressive leaders are keenly solicitous that wasteful duplication of time and money cease, in building new churches or occupying new fields. The feeling is that some method, such as that of the federations, be followed, that will sponser

1. cf. Douglas, Church Comity. pp. 53.
2. Principles and Rules of the Comity Commission of the Chicago Church Federation. pp. 3 (pamphlet).
3. cf. California State Church Federation Department of Superintendents Comity Commission. (pamphlet).

the location of churches only when there is a genuine need rather than to foster the superficial planning of any one denomination.

The need for some such fraternal relationship has forced the churches to work unitedly in distributing their religious forces. The federations have taken the place of leadership, and are so successfully carrying forward comity projects that with very few exceptions the Protestant Churches have given their most hearty support in their united program of comity.

There are a number of activities operated by the federations besides the outstanding ones that we have considered. Inasmuch as the remaining are not carried on by all federations, we shall only mention them.

Foremost of these minor activities is the race relations work. This work is mainly concerned with the application of Christian principles to all race problems. The same is true of the relation of the Protestant, Jewish, and Catholic Churches. The National Council has a program of international church relationships in which it aims to keep in contact with the churches of other lands. This activity is worthwhile in view of the international campaign for world peace advanced by the Christian Church. In these minor activities the federation movement functions as a clearing house through which the individual churches and denominations may express themselves and pool their efforts in meeting racial and international problems that are vital to the churches.

SUMMARY

What the federations actually do is the criteria by which the average church member judges the worthiness of the organization. As we have developed our consideration of the federations at work we have noted several points which seemed to us to manifest the unifying element

as it is found in federation functioning.

A great deal of cooperation is necessary for the sake of practical effectiveness in the daily work of the churches. The tasks of the church are not those of any one church alone. In the primary responsibility of winning men and women to Christ, it has been demonstrated that every church is immensely reinforced when the churches of a community and the nation unite in a concerted appeal. The board of education, or a judge in a juvenile court can hardly be expected to go into the intricacies of ecclesiastical divisions when dealing with the churches. As they deal with the federation they are in contact with one organization representative of the Protestant Churches of the community. The experience of the churches has been that they cannot remain apart by themselves and render progressive service. They have learned from the increased results of unified functioning that it is imperative that they work together. In the final analysis the churches cannot expect people to believe in the brotherhood of man, or expect them to use the principles of Christ in their industrial and racial contacts, if the churches themselves do not exhibit such a spirit of love and brotherliness in a convincing measure themselves. And as the churches have come to see the need and great value of cooperative functioning as it is shown through the actual functioning of the federations, they have come to ally themselves with all their resources with the movement.

The attitude of the great majority of denominations as to the practicability of federation work is reflected in the following quotations:

The Northern Baptist Convention stated its opinion in this excerpt from the official report:

"Under its charter the Federal Council has done its work now for more than two decades, rising from small beginnings, gathering about it many of the constructive minds of the churches in this generation, constantly enlarging and widening the scope of its influence until it stands among the most useful and efficient examples of interchurch cooperation to be found anywhere in the world. Through it the influence of the constituent churches is being felt in all the great religious, social movements of the day."¹

The official report of the Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church included a similar statement relative to its worthiness.

"The field activity of the Council is varied. It is the constituent denominations themselves functioning cooperatively in matters of common interest. It is an essential instrument for the churches in expressing their oneness in Jesus Christ as their Divine Lord and Saviour.

"Your committee recommends that the Assembly pledge its hearty cooperation and support in the nationwide evangelistic program, and every good work undertaken and fostered by the council, in its great enterprise for international friendship and world peace; in its large and practical interest in social problems as well as in its fundamental missionary and evangelistic service."²

The churches unite in cooperative activities through the medium of the federation because it renders a service which cannot be found elsewhere.

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1. Reports submitted to the Annual Meeting of the Executive Committee. Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. pp. 3.

2. Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

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During the course of our investigation we have considered the Church Federation Movement from three aspects. The first chapter was given over to a general historical survey of the movement, including the background out of which it came. In this regard we observe that two life streams prepared the way for this movement. First, the culminative work of early interdenominational organizations, particularly the Evangelical Alliance and the Open and Institutional Church League. Secondly, the actual formation of a few local federative bodies, particularly the New York Federation organized by the alumni association of Union Seminary.

The second chapter was concerned with the basis on which the movement was formed, and the type of organization developed to promote the program which it has proposed to forward.

The third chapter was given over to a consideration of the actual work which is being done by the local federations and the national organization.

The Protestant churches of America pride themselves on their liberty and independence. The denominational spirit is strong, and the majority of church members and leaders are convinced that denominationalism is best for the Protestant churches of America. What is needed then is an organization that will permit the churches to retain their denominational independence and authority, and at the same time unite them into one body that can successfully combine the strength of

all into one in forwarding the work of the churches. That is precisely the function of the Federation movement.

The genius of the whole movement is the fact that it enables the denominations to unite into one group without infringing in any way upon their denominational loyalties and independent authority. In contrast to other movements that emphasize an agreement in creedal statements, nature of the ministry or form of government, the federal movement is convinced that we are already one and that the resulting common spirit and purpose is the best basis for effective unity here and now. The most vital unity is not to be found in the realm of intellectual agreements, but in the facing of concrete situations and the promulgation of the spiritual work for which our church exists.

There has been a widespread response to the appeal for unified action as the movement has brought before the churches outstanding needs and problems that face them. The sense of need for a united approach to new social responsibilities; the need for readjustment and redistribution in the location of new churches; the necessity for a recognized system for adequate Christian education, have been incentives that are powerful factors in bringing the churches together in a group that will pool all their individual resources in ministering to their mutual objectives.

One of the basic features of this movement which has been subjected to criticism is the lack of any authority except that of moral persuasion. The churches which compose the membership of the movement, both national and local, are its head. It has its being in them and by their will alone. If they desire, this voluntary association

will be dissolved and cease to be. We find that this arrangement has been a help rather than a hinderance. Men and women adverse to organized union have been willing to pool their knowledge, time and labor in behalf of the greater interests of the Church.

The movement is young; it has only been in existence for twenty-three years, and a portion of that short period was concerned with the disorganizing effects of the world war. Following the cessation of the war, the movement began to make plans to organize the Churches to meet the religious ferment and the social unrest that always follows war. In the main, the results have been satisfactory. Today there are fifty-three local federations in active operation. The national organization is composed of twenty-eight member denominations besides several others that stand as affiliated bodies. The State organizations, of which there are only seven, are weak, but they show promise of development.

The moral strength of these combined churches and denominations has not gone unheeded. They have made their influence felt in their pleas for world peace, and in their projects carrying the Gospel throughout the nation. Nor has industrial injustice been impervious to its strength. Through the work of the movement, the church has won its right to speak in industrial matters that vitally affect its membership. In the local field the federations have been able to almost double the effectiveness of the Protestant churches in the community. Christian brotherhood in practical operation has achieved encouraging results.

In giving the results of his survey covering the work of the federation movement, Dr. P. C. Douglas states that to a large percentage

of its constituency the movement stands as the symbol of Christian unity and acts as a signpost pointing the way to the greater unity to come. As the movement has sought to heed Christ's prayer that all might be one, it has demonstrated to the church world the effectiveness of cooperative activity without lessening denominational sovereignty. It has drawn the Churches into one fellowship, and united them into one body with a single purpose, the extension of the work that they have been given by their founder to do.

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