

CHAPTER II

UNITY'S PERIOD OF STRUGGLE

The Early Years

When Mrs. Fillmore, cured of her consumption by Christian Science, decided to share her experience with her ailing friends, she had no conception of what was finally to emerge from that experience as it has taken form through the years. To-day the "Winged-Globe," symbol of Unity, is known around the world.¹ The beginning was extremely simple. Mr. Fillmore, not yet fully won to Christian Science, continued to extricate himself from his real estate tumble; in fact, after he began work with Mrs. Fillmore,

¹Mr. Fillmore found the "Winged-Globe" in F. B. Dowd, The Temple of the Rosycross, (Chicago: F. B. Dowd Publishing Co., 1897). Mr. Dowd said it was the symbol of a "perfected soul." Modern Thought, I (Nov., 1889), 11. Mr. Fillmore now gives the following explanation of its symbolism: "The winged globe or sun disk, as a religious symbol, had its earliest use in Egypt, but it is found in various forms in the religions of other races. It represents the relation existing between Spirit, soul and body. Soul gives wings to the body. Spirit is the enveloping principle, like the atmosphere in which both soul and body exist, and from which they draw their original inspiration.

"The winged globe is also a symbol of the earth and its soul. The earth has soul, as have its products of every description. All exist in the luminiferous ether, the anima mundi, the divine mother. When the people of the earth lift up their thoughts to God, the Animus Dei or directive Spirit, then the planet takes wings into a higher radiation of universal life--the mortal puts on immortality.

"As man develops spiritual consciousness, he attains the realization of the soul as the wings of the body. Back of the soul is Spirit. It quickens and energizes the soul, that is, it gives the soul wings. Artists paint their angels with wings, representing in this way their freedom from physical fetters. But the soul does not have wings like a bird. The life activity of the soul is quickened by Spirit until it rises above the thoughts of matter and floats free in the ether or fourth dimension which Jesus called the kingdom of the heavens.

"Follow the teachings of Unity and you will realize for yourself that you are the winged globe." Charles Fillmore, "The Winged-Globe," Unity, LXXXIV (June, 1936), 66 f.

he continued in that business until 1900. However, the two united in 1889 to publish a little magazine, Modern Thought. The first issue of this little sixteen-page paper was one thousand copies. About four pages were given to advertisements of Christian Science healers and the large list of occult literature then flooding the community. During that first year they carried one secular advertisement--that of a painless dentist, who had his office in the same building.¹ Mrs. Fillmore was enthusiastically active in trying to perfect a Christian Science organization in Kansas City. She immediately called for a room large enough to seat two hundred, which might be used as a meeting place. Such a room was found in the Deardorf Building, Eleventh and Main Streets, and to this the Fillmores moved the office of Modern Thought from the Journal Building where they had started. In September, 1889, Mrs. Fillmore invited those who would to join them there in meetings twice each week, stating:

A few earnest men and women have undertaken to establish here a center from which to radiate thoughts having for their basis the love principle as taught by Christ, and they earnestly ask for the cooperation of all seekers after Truth, regardless of sect or creed.²

The services took the form of the Methodist testimony meetings of that time; only the testimonies were of healing. An added feature was group-meditation upon some selected thought for a

¹Modern Thought felt that some explanation was necessary. It announced that, while it did not feature miscellaneous advertising, this one came under the "category of human needs." It suggested, also, that the dentist's rooms were adjoining those of the Christian Science Association, making it especially convenient for the ones attending their meetings. Modern Thought, I (Nov., 1889), 12.

²Modern Thought, I (Oct., 1889), 8.

considerable period of silence. In 1890 a few from this original group began to gather each evening at nine o'clock to pray for those in "trouble, sickness or poverty." This was suggested as a way of helping those who were loyal in their search for Truth, but found themselves so "dominated by the surrounding error" that they needed a helping hand to overcome their sins, ills, and troubles. Absent healing had already been pronounced a success by leaders in the Mental-Cure movement. Any one might unite with this group regardless of where he lived if he would agree to sit in the silence fifteen minutes each evening, meditating upon a pre-announced thought. People having needs were encouraged to write to Modern Thought and were given to understand that there would be no fees but, as each felt helped, he might advance the work by a love offering. The first thoughts held were quite simple: "Holy Spirit, thou hast glorified me." "Love and Wisdom--Jesus Christ." These are good examples. This group was soon named "Society of Silent Help." Their attention was already turned to the area round about; and they suggested that, wherever two or three in a community had come into an understanding of the Truth, these form a similar society and unite with the one in Kansas City. The aim was to realize the presence of God so intensely that all error of mind and body, at least in those practicing it, would be swept away. Thus from the beginning, two methods of dealing with problems were set up: first, that of Personal ministration, and, second, that of collective absentee treatment. Both have been continued by Unity. The Fillmores personally carried on both types until 1908, when Mr. Fillmore

withdrew from personal healing to give all his time to Silent Unity. Most Unity Centers carry healers; the local Kansas City society now has twelve.

The name of the other type of service was changed in 1891 to the "Society of Silent Unity." Within one year Silent Unity was receiving daily from ten to twenty requests for aid; these have so increased through the years that Silent Unity to-day is not only the basic healing agency of Unity School but is the primary channel through which money comes for the extension of her physical equipment. This group answers all requests for aid of every sort--physical, financial, mental, social, religious. The department at first made no attempt to return a personal answer to each request. Each inquirer received a number and then he looked in the next issue of the magazine to see the thought that was being held for him at headquarters. With the passing years a master-organization had been perfected, and all correspondents now receive personal attention. This does not mean, however, that each disease is carefully diagnosed and given specialized treatment. Although Unity School has a textbook, Divine Remedies, which suggests the physical or secondary causes of many diseases, that is not important in the cure. Patients are encouraged to tell about their troubles only so that they can free their minds of the error connected with it. As we shall explain later, Unity thinks that the same prayer will work in healing any disease. In fact, as early as 1911, Mrs. Fillmore declared that they had found that the best results were obtained when they treated patients collectively.¹

Silent Unity has made a phenomenal growth through the years. Published figures are as follows: 1902, Silent Unity had ten thousand registered members who held the evening silence. By 1913 this number had increased to twenty-six thousand. In 1910 they claimed to be treating six thousand persons weekly. In 1920, their banner year, Silent Unity handled 600,007 letters and 16, 717 telegrams. During the depression years there was a considerable decrease. Mrs. Clara May Rowland, now head of the department, explains that this was due to the fact that people did not have the money for a love offering.¹ When the number of requests declined Silent Unity wrote to many of the patients suggesting that they continue writing for help, assuring them that their prayers would be acceptable until they were in position to continue their love offerings. Many, however, refused to accept such service. To-day Silent Unity workers number one hundred and four. Many of these have gone through training lasting from two to three years. Emphasis is placed on quick service. All letters are handled by the second day after they are received; telegrams are answered at once. Two Silent Unity meetings are held each day in the chapel to pray collectively for those who have asked for aid. Each writer also "holds the thought" which he is sending to the one who has made a request. One person is kept on duty in the prayer-room night and day so that prayer is continuous in Silent Unity.

Silent Unity is now receiving about ten thousand letters

¹Information concerning depression effects came from Clara May Rowland, personal interview.

each week. These are classified by the office in five groups: health, prosperity, spiritual illumination, religious interpretation, and family troubles or human relations. For many years nearly all requests were requests for prayers for health; then prosperity became the most usual subject of petition. Letters asking for prayers for health and for help in solving family difficulties are now at the head of the list. In each of its replies Silent Unity sends three things--a prayer to be held for the difficulty, a statement as to the meaning of the teachings of Unity, and instructions as to how each can cooperate with Unity in helping themselves. These instructions close with a section called "Compensation," which will be discussed later.

The year following the organization of Silent Unity was largely consumed by the arguments over the nature of their teachings as related to the use of the term "Christian Science." That story has been told. In 1892 Modern Thought, now Thought, was moved to larger quarters in the Hall Building, Ninth and Walnut Streets, Kansas City. A small composing room was set up, but the forms were sent out for printing. By late 1892 Mr. Fillmore, who until this time had hesitated to try personal healing, felt that he was able to demonstrate change in his own physical condition. He then united with Mrs. Fillmore in the advertisement: "Charles And Myrtle Fillmore, Teachers and Healers." Both wrote prolifically for their magazine; he used the pen-name "Leo Virgo," and Mrs. Fillmore signed her articles with her initial "M." The home and the three growing children were cared for by Mary (Stone) Fillmore, Charles' mother, who had arrived to make her home with the family shortly after they settled in Kansas City. She, a

large, assertive type, so possessed the home life that Myrtle was able to do little there although she was a home-loving woman. This partially explains why Myrtle Fillmore quite early developed a children's department in their magazine under the name "Wee Wisdom." She decided in 1893 to make this department into a separate magazine, but in 1895 it was returned to the original magazine. However, in 1898, Wee Wisdom was given a second chance. It is now one of Unity's most popular magazines with a range of influence far beyond those interested in Unity's religious teachings.

When Modern Thought was first issued it carried display advertisements for healers and teachers. These gradually increased in both size and numbers so as to crowd out many other things. In 1894 the editor announced a new policy; henceforth he would publish only a healer's directory, giving name and address. He declared that while their real message was a "renewing of the mind through righteousness," so much emphasis was being put in healings that it resembled "patent medicine methods."¹ The columns of the magazine were at that time closed to all save those who practiced "Pure Mind Healing" only. The cost of placing one's name in the directory was two dollars, which could be paid only by getting four new subscribers to the paper. The "Unity Book Company," the name under which the Fillmores had been transacting business since 1891, was re-organized as the "Unity Tract Society" in May, 1897. This was in line with Mr. Fillmore's general thinking as expressed in his comment on healing methods:

¹Thought, VI (June, 1894), 130 (editorial).

We did it that our publishing department might be relieved of the appearance of a commercial venture. The dollar tag has been so persistently hung on this movement in its various departments that it has become known to the public at large as a new system of therapeutics, with the usual financial appendix, instead of a religion and its unselfish dispensation. . . . This is not a business but a ministry.¹

This first period was clearly the mental health period. Although they spoke of prosperity in 1890, the Fillmores placed no emphasis upon it but followed the trend of all similar groups of the day until almost the turn of the century. Mr. Fillmore's first such article, "Overcoming the Poverty Idea," first appeared in 1898.² His most publicized article favoring Vegetarianism, "Flesh Eating, Metaphysically Considered," first was issued in 1896.

Unity Organizes

Unity Society of Practical Christianity

In 1898 the Fillmores moved their growing organization from the Hall Building to a brick cottage, 1315 McGee Street, where it remained for the next seven years. The records indicate that these were the group's happiest years. By securing a small printing press they became equipped to complete all their work; their staff increased until there were ten congenial spirits on it, among whom was the irrepressible Jennie H. Croft, who was a driving force in the movement for more than thirty years. By 1900 the circulation of the magazine had increased beyond eight thousand, and all were kept busy. One of their number prepared luncheon for the group each day, a vegetarian meal, and thus was

¹Unity, VIII (May, 1897), 383 (editorial).

²Unity, XI (Aug., 1898), 57 ff.

started what was later to blossom out as Unity Vegetarian Inn.

Interest increased, and subscriptions poured in until it became apparent that these quarters would not long be sufficient to meet the demands of the magazine. The local group also needed larger quarters for their Sunday services. Therefore, the first financial campaign of Unity was launched. In July, 1903 "The Unity Society of Practical Christianity" was incorporated as a holding corporation with a board of directors numbering twelve, of which W. G. Haseltine was president. The society was organized for "scientific and educational purposes viz., the study and demonstration of Universal Law."¹ It was given power to fix qualifications and conditions of membership and to purchase and hold any and all kinds of property for its exclusive use and benefit. One of the by-laws gave it the right to license properly qualified persons "to perform all the privileges of a minister of the gospel," and to grant a diploma to those qualified for special lines of service. Appeal was made in the magazine for contributions. The first month fifty-five dollars was reported. By September, 1904 this had increased to six hundred twenty-one dollars and eighty-two cents.

Prosperity Treatments

Unity's "Prosperity Thought" and treatments were conceived in the midst of its first financial campaign. For some years Unity had carried two meditations, a "Noon-Thought" and a "Class-Thought" for the evening silence. In April, 1904 the "Prosperity

¹The Unity Society of Practical Christianity, p. 5.
(Pamphlet.)

Thought" replaced the "Noon-Thought." Mr. Fillmore made a two-page explanation of the change, the substance of which can best be expressed in his words: "It is our right to be prosperous."¹ In July he continued the education of his readers by informing them that poverty, like sickness, was a disease and should be treated in the same fashion. He also announced that they had begun to treat delinquent subscribers for prosperity with very gratifying results. This statement aroused numerous criticisms and with them the suggestion that they should apply the medicine to themselves so that they would not have to make appeals for building funds. Mr. Fillmore's explanation is important to an understanding of their position:

There is quite a lot of misconception and incredulity about the prosperity part of our work, because people do not understand it. . . . The foundation of it all and the medium through which it is accomplished is the Universal Mind. This is all present and open to all who will take advantage of its potentialities. Whatever man wants he can have by voicing his desire in the right way into the Universal Mind. It is pregnant with infinite possibilities, under certain laws.

One of these laws of mind is thought radiation, from center to circumference. Each individual has a mind center, which radiates its ideas to the body and immediate environment. So an aggregation of individuals can establish a thought center, from which may be radiated ideas of a higher potency than the average surrounding thoughts, if all agree upon certain ideas and mentally concentrate to that end. You see it is a mere matter of unifying our thoughts and raising them to a high rate of radiation.

We form the center of a group, and those who have faith in our power and who are cooperating with us in thought, are the working circumference. We declare the idea, and radiate it forth; they catch it mentally and execute it in their affairs. . . .

As a Health Center, we radiate certain ideas about health, and people who put their minds in right relation are healed daily all over the country.

¹Charles Fillmore, "Explanation of Prosperity Thought," Unity, XX (April, 1904), 225.

As a Prosperity Center, we radiate certain ideas about prosperity, and those who believe in the power, open their minds and catch thoughts that help them to become more prosperous.

Those ignorant of the process jump to the conclusion that if we know the law of prosperity so well we should take advantage of it ourselves and become millionaires. The fact is we deal with the originating ideas only; you who work in the world's affairs carry it out. A parallel is that of the inventor, who seldom gets the financial profit out of his ideas,--the promoter and the dealer in the manufactured article make the money.

We do not drive a hard bargain with you and demand that you shall pay us in advance a stated sum for our health or prosperity radiations, but merely ask you to return to us a tithe of the good that comes to you. A just man or woman will do this without compulsion, and we find that our radiations do not reach the unjust and miserly.¹

During the latter part of 1904 and early 1905, while the prosperity discussion was in progress little was said about the new headquarters' fund started the year before. But the leaders had been searching and had found a suitable site at 313-315 Tracy Street, about twelve blocks from the business center of the city. They now announced their purchase and asked for donations to the amount of a hundred thousand dollars with which they planned to erect a publishing plant, a sanitarium, and a healing temple, all in one. Every subscriber of Unity was asked to send a gift and with it a blessing which might be placed in the cornerstone of the new building.

The "Red Leaf" Controversy

Work on their new building was scarcely under way when the Fillmore precipitated the most prolonged and pronounced criticism of their careers. This was the controversy over the

¹Charles Fillmore, "About Prosperity Treatments," Unity, XXI (Dec., 1904), 366f.

use of the "Red Leaf." The "Healing" and "Prosperity" thoughts of Unity, October, 1905, came forth on a page bright red in color. The following explanation accompanied it:

This leaf has been spiritually created by the Unity Society members in Kansas City. It is charged with healing-thought power and will connect all who use it with the Jesus Christ consciousness.

Hold it in your hands while repeating over and over the words of Truth and you will feel the Power of the Holy Spirit and the promise of Jesus Christ will be fulfilled in you according to your faith.¹

The negative response to this was much greater than to the "Prosperity Thought." Month after month Mr. Fillmore defended their action. His editorials are a revelation of the character of his thinking. I quote from a number of them:

We respect the conservative element, but we are not to be hampered by what others think. We are guided by the Spirit in Man.

I would ask you who are object n to this Red Leaf as a help to concentration, did Jesus lay hands on the sick and heal them in many instances; did he put clay on the blind man's eyes; did he say, "These signs shall follow them that believe. . . . and they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover? Did Paul bless the handkerchiefs that healed, and did the sick recover from the shadow of Peter. This is the Holy Ghost power--another degree of manifestation beyond that of Spiritual perception, yet under the same law. . . .

There is a vast difference between laying on of hands with prayer, and laying on of hands without prayer. One is spiritual healing, while the other is merely magic. Those in the understanding of the law through which mind manifests know why this is so. The hand is a conductor of the current which the I AM generates in the mind. If the I AM is fixed on God, a direct connection is made with the One Life, while if attention is on the hand, and human magnetism the highest concept, there is but a very limited life flow. . . .

This Red Sheet has been present at the Silent Unity meetings, both open and closed sessions, for the last fifteen days, and carries not only the statement of Truth, but also a great substance radiation, that connects it with our Center and through us with Divine Mind.²

¹Unity, XXIII (Oct., 1905), insert.

²Charles Fillmore, "The Red Leaf," Unity, XXIII (Dec., 1905), 366 f.

The Red Leaf is not to be used as a mustard plaster or a magnetic belt, by those who are in the understanding of the Truth, but as an aid to concentration. Hold it in your hands and slowly read the words over, then close your eyes and repeat them mentally. Do this until your mind is saturated with the thought. Then meditate upon its meaning, and let it sink deep into your consciousness. This is the right use of the Red Leaf.

But we would not be truthful if we did not plainly tell you that the Red Leaf is charged with a spiritual, mental, physical potency not common to the outer world, and does put those who use it into a certain unity with higher realms of consciousness, according to their faith. If it is used as a physical aid, by applying to the ailing parts, it increases the vital flow and allays pain; applied mentally, it helps to gather the scattered thoughts. . . . This is not human magnetism, but a life current direct from the Fountain Head. The difference between animal magnetism and this spiritual force is difficult to explain, because of the lack of understanding of the relations which the various planes of consciousness bear to one another. The open door to the Great Life Fountain is the Lord Jesus, whose disciples we are, and whose power we invoke.¹

The question is asked by many why they get so much stronger realization of spiritual power when holding the thought with the Red Leaf in their hands. The polarity of all forms is accepted as a scientific fact, and in this is involved the potency of the Red Leaf. Man has his positive and negative poles--the mind being the positive and the body the negative. All thoughts and states of consciousness have this "yes" and "no," or positive and negative points of action. Health is harmony and balance between the "yes" and "no" of consciousness. Any thought habit that continually throws the positive and affirmative to certain brain centers, and depletes other centers, must finally result in congestion of vital force, nerve fluid, blood. This produces nearly all the ills that flesh is heir to. The remedy is mental and physical poise and equilibrium.

How shall we again balance our forces so that every function shall receive its proper supply of vitality? Through right thought. Equalize your thinking, and you will force the blood into its proper channels.

You need help to do this. That is the office of the Red Leaf. When you take it in your hands, your thought is throbbing in your head, and you cannot "let go." But as you hold the leaf, and quietly repeat the words, your attention is directed to the paper, and your thought follows, and the depleted negative of consciousness is raised to a degree of the

¹Charles Fillmore, "How to Use the Red Leaf," Unity, XXIV (Jan., 1906), 31.

positive.¹

No claim is made that there is any healing virtue in the Red Leaf--some mind must be charged with the healing thought before it is concentrated upon this visible expression. Those who try to use it as a mustard plaster will miss the mark of true healing. But with mental cooperation it can be applied to the nerve centers in the body and help the Spirit in its word of peace. The mind and the body often get separated, and treatments are like empty repetitions of parrot-like words. This is caused by a rate of mind vibration so high that the body does not sense it. The mental vibrations pass through the physical as a very high voltage of electricity, which meets with no resistance and is not felt. Here the Red Leaf forms a center of union between these separated egos, and the mind is again restored to its lawful dominion.

To use the Red Leaf in this month's Unity: Place it on the nerve center nearest the affected part and mentally affirm, "Spirit--Mind Illumines and Heals." If it is a headache, place the sheet on the forehead. If stomach ache, place it on the pit of the stomach, etc. Always remember that the object of this process is to concentrate spiritual thoughts in the mind that moves the body, to the end that they may be transformed by the Spirit. With this understanding, we assure you no spiritual deterioration will occur through use of the Red Leaf.²

The Red Leaf was soon widely publicized. In July, 1906, one E. B. Lyman wrote an inquiry to The New York Times about this "Christian Science in a plaster shape." His comments suggest the interpretation given to it by the unbelieving public:

You may pay a dollar for a year of Unity, published in Kansas City, Mo., and receive as an insert in each month's number the wonderful Red Leaf. Have you a toothache, a cancerous growth. . . anything that can be classed as an ill of the flesh? Merely apply the Red Leaf to or near the affected organ and, presto, you are healed. There are no expensive books to buy, no "readers" to give absent treatment to your money. Just a little Red Leaf and you. . . Perhaps your health is good, but your financial status is not

¹Charles Fillmore, "Questions about the Red Leaf," Unity, XXIV (April, 1906), 239.

²Charles Fillmore, "Right Use of the Red Leaf," Unity, XXIV (May, 1906), 335 f.

what it ought to be, from your unselfish point of view. . . . Simply apply the little Red Leaf to pocketbook or business letter head, or sleep with it under your pillow, and you will experience a turn in the tide of your affairs and you will get a prompt harvest of the "long greens." Or perhaps you are wealthy and well, but are not contented with your psychological make-up. Apply the Red Leaf as directed and get confidence, trust and courage.¹

The editor of Unity, upon receiving this statement, declared that he himself could not have written a better summary of the virtues of the Red Leaf, reporting that many serious letters of inquiry had come because of the free advertising they had thus received. The discussion continued into 1908. Unity offered to send the Red Leaf under separate cover to any of its readers who desired more than one, saying: "In this way we expect to add increased power to the leaves, as they will be especially prepared for each applicant."² The June, 1907 Leaf was of pink colored paper. The editor gave two reasons for this change: first, the weather was too warm for red; and, second, the dominant word in the thought for the month was "Love" and its radiation is pink. "When you see a pink radiation in the silence you may know that the most active thought in your consciousness is love."³ Afterwards other colors were used to correspond with the thoughts expressed; as late as 1934 Unity was experimenting with colors as symbols or manifestations of particular thoughts.

¹E. B. Lyman, The New York Times, July 15, 1906, quoted in Unity, XXV (Aug., 1906), 126.

²Unity, XXV (Oct., 1906), 313.

³Unity, XXVI (June, 1907), 407.

The Financial Struggle

Contributions and Bonds

While the Red Leaf discussion was progressing, the first Unity structure was slowly taking form. The estimated cost was twenty thousand dollars, about six thousand of which went for the site. Because the money was slow in being realized the trustees of Unity Society of Practical Christianity decided to offer twelve thousand dollars in bonds to its adherents. The appeal for funds was constant in Unity magazine, and the cornerstone dedication was postponed that people might have additional opportunity to place their blessings on it. A critic wrote Mr. Fillmore that this was just a scheme to get people to contribute. Mr. Fillmore was equally frank in his reply:

Well, what if we are? Is it not a good proposition? Whoever contributes gets a place in the cornerstone of the first exclusively New Thought structure in the country. It identifies you with the most powerful spiritual center on this planet, and you are constantly in touch with higher planes of consciousness through us.

We make this possible through our eternal spiritual vigilance. Night and day, mental and spiritual forces are being generated and sent forth into the race mind from this center, and those who identify themselves with us are enveloped in a great life-giving aura that perpetually imparts health, protection and prosperity.

Perhaps it was the very audacity of his claims that attracted for he insisted that, while many thought it was a little thing to get their names in the cornerstone, the time would soon come when they would class it as a privilege and honor equal to the "signing of the Declaration of the Independence."

¹"Questions and Answers," Unity, XXIV (May, 1906), 296.

Unity's first building was dedicated August, 1906 as a "Church, a School and a Health Dispensary."¹ At that time love offerings totalling six thousand dollars had been contributed, and the Society was in debt for the rest. The years immediately following were largely given over to schemes for lifting this debt. Hardly an issue of the magazine is published without some appeal; most of the means used by organizations of that day to attract money were employed. Announcement was made that Silent Unity was giving prosperity treatments to all who had already made contributions, and they were being especially prospered for their outlay. Souvenir postcards, views inside and outside of the building, were offered with the assurance that whoever bought them would know that his mite was "being invested in the safest bank on earth." The Women's Auxiliary, organized for some time, contributed in the usual manner of such church organizations--giving bazaars, suppers and lectures. Unity Guild for young people was organized, January, 1907, and in two years it was able to contribute three hundred ninety-four dollars to the fund. The Unity emblem, the "Winged-Globe," made into a pin, was offered at one dollar to those who desired the article, and a souvenir "China Plate, with photograph of the building," was sold to aid in liquidating the debt.

The climax of the campaign was reached in the "Prosperity Dollar Demonstration." In November, 1908 the trustees of Unity Society announced that they would mail a new paper dollar, blessed like the Red Leaf, to any who would agree to use it as a nucleus

¹Unity, XXV (Sept., 1906), 201.

about which to gather prosperity thoughts. This was to be a demonstration that God is the prosperity of his people. Every applicant must agree to "hold the Prosperity Thought" attached to the dollar every day until December 20 and then return the dollar to Unity Society with any increase which had been manifested in his affairs as a result of the treatment. Two thousand one hundred eighty-one new bills were mailed, and when the returns came the amount was four thousand eight hundred forty-eight dollars. Since the total expense was only one hundred seventy-three dollars, the Society realized almost two thousand five hundred dollars toward its debt, and the demonstration was pronounced a success.

Meanwhile, money for the care of the new building had to be raised, and the expenses of the Society incident to its Sunday program had to be met. These were estimated at approximately eighteen dollars per week, which was to come from the regular Sunday offerings. Added to this was a love offering for the speaker of the day. The love offerings generally ran much more than the former, and the trustees had great difficulty in securing from the members and their visiting friends funds sufficient to meet the need. Each month they published a report. For many weeks during 1908-1909 the weekly offerings for current expenses averaged less than five dollars. Therefore, money sent from friends away from Kansas City, who thought they were contributing to the lifting of the debt, had to be used for local expenses. This did not seem right to the leaders; so the editor of Weekly Unity, a little paper but recently started by the local group for

their own enlightenment, commented:

Put the nickel, dime, quarter, dollar into the envelope, and if necessary do without some little luxury that means practically nothing to you, a drink of soda water, a cigar, a little candy, chewing gum or thoughtless expense.¹

One wonders what had happened to their prosperity demonstrations! Only two thousand had sent love offerings and got their names in the cornerstone of the building, yet at this time there were six thousand subscribers to Unity. These were now asked to send a Christmas gift of one dollar each for the building fund. Finally, in April, 1909, "Unity Correspondence School" was opened, and lessons began to go out to students on the love offering basis. Unity Society announced the liquidation of the debt in July, 1911.

Prosperity Banks

Before the building was paid for it was outgrown by the expanding work of Unity. During this time there had been two organizations: Unity Society of Practical Christianity, set up in 1903 as a holding corporation; and Unity Tract Society, personal property of the Fillmores, publishers of Unity and Wee Wisdom. All business was handled by the latter company, and they in turn made a love offering of six hundred dollars annually to the local society for the use of the building. In 1909 the next lot was purchased by the Unity Tract Society and appeal was made for at least fifty thousand dollars to erect a plant sufficient to meet the growing needs of the business. By January, 1910 the correspondence school had enrolled eight hundred, and all these

¹"A Little Plain Talk," Weekly Unity, I (Sept. 4, 1909), 1.

were regularly contributing love offerings. The leaders then received another of their inspirations, and the "Prosperity Bank" sprang into existence as a supplement to the "Prosperity Blessing." Certainly the adherents of Unity wanted its help in achieving prosperity and also wished their friends to enjoy the same great privilege! The "Prosperity Bank" was originated as a technique for making such a purpose effective. Those desiring special prosperity treatments were asked to write for a bank. They thus pledged themselves to the use of Unity's "Prosperity Thought" as directed for a period of ten weeks. The user placed a ten cent coin in the bank each week as a reminder and earnest of the prosperity which was rightly his. Silent Unity agreed to give one month's treatment to each user as its part of the demonstration. After ten weeks the user could forward one dollar to headquarters with the name of some friend to whom he desired one of Unity's magazines sent for the next year. No statistics are available to show how rapidly the idea took hold, but in 1925 Unity School announced that they were mailing an average of eight thousand banks each month. The "Prosperity Bank" has been an integral part of Unity's subscription system since 1910 and to-day is particularly pushed in the magazine Good Business. The following advertisement suggests the type of appeal made to their constituents:

Why use Unity Prosperity Bank?

Because it gives you a working knowledge of mind and soul action in contracting the dynamic things of Spirit.

Because it trains you to look back of appearance for all

that you can possibly need or want.

Because it teaches you how to create what you need from the formless substance of the invisible realm of God.

Because it relieves your mind of all care, uncertainty and fear regarding money matters.

Because its use makes you strictly honest, just, free, generous and forgiving in all monetary dealings.

Because it helps to take your attention from petty, sordid considerations of making ends meet, of rainy days, or hoarding and scrimping.

Because it leaves you free to put the best of yourself into your work, knowing that God brings the increase.

Because it puts you in touch with Silent Unity, which holds you in prayerful meditation for success.

Because and this is the most important because--it makes you know yourself as an heir of God; and as a co-worker with him in bringing forth into visible expression his perfect universe. This is your prerogative. Now use it!¹

This plan of to-day calls for a drill of seven weeks with three dollars saved, thus doing three times as much for the cause as when the "Prosperity Barks" were first started.

"Silent-70"

Unity School of Christianity also has its missionary system, organized in June, 1910. As Jesus chose seventy and sent them out into the towns and villages round about, so Unity sends out its "Silent-70," except that the seventy have become a whole army. When the first call was made for a group to distribute free literature, many more than seventy responded; so they were enrolled in groups of that number, each group being designated by a letter. By July, 1912, groups to the letter "A" had been set up. The director of the department, Miss Kate F. Robertson,

¹Unity, LVIII (May, 1923), 38.

reports that "Silent-70" has enrolled about six thousand since the department began.¹ Desire to spread the gospel of Unity is the only preparation necessary to join the group. The literature is spread primarily through institutions--orphan, penal, soldiers' and sailors' homes, hospitals, county poor farms, and any other that will accept the service. For example, the American Red Cross, New York, receives one hundred fifty Wee Wisdoms monthly. Libraries, domestic and foreign, are also supplied from this department. At the present time there are approximately twelve hundred on Unity's mailing list. The literature thus sent is mostly of two sorts, recent issues of their several magazines and pamphlets. During 1933 "Silent-70" mailed 383,455 separate pieces of literature. Recent issues of the magazines were distributed in the following proportion: Weekly Unity, 7,000; Daily Word, 2,500; Unity, 1,600; Good Business, 1,500; Wee Wisdom, 1,600; Progress, 1,300. This was a monthly distribution. There are also 24,768 annual subscriptions of current magazines now charged to the account of "Silent-70." The literature is sent wherever there is a member of the group who will assume responsibility for its distribution.

The department specializes in prison propaganda. Since 1922 it has given 10,000 copies of Lessons in Truth with an annual subscription to one or more magazines to prisoners and is now corresponding with some two thousand inmates of prisons. The local organization at Kansas City also visits the nearby federal and state prisons at Leavenworth and Lansing, Kansas, once each

¹Statement by Kate F. Robertson, personal interview.

month, carrying an appropriate program. The department advertises that it does no "welfare work" for discharged prisoners. Another work of which "Silent-70" is quite proud is the free distribution of literature in Braille. Two books, Lessons in Truth and Finding the Christ, both written by H. Emilie Cady, and two magazines, Unity Daily Word and Wee Wisdom, are now available to any competent to use them. In 1932 two thousand and forty monthly copies of the former magazine were distributed. The money for this comes from the registered members of "Silent-70" who contribute love offerings and from others they can interest in this kind of work. Special appeal is now made for contributions to the "Prison Fund" and to the Braille side of the work.

Some idea of the rate of growth of the Unity movement in the early nineteen hundreds can be gained from statistics published in 1910.¹ They then reported more than three hundred members of the local Kansas City Society with an average Sunday school attendance for the year of one hundred fourteen. Fifteen hundred were registered in the Correspondence School; twenty thousand were members of Silent Unity, and the business of Unity Tract Society required forty full-time workers. Unity Vegetarian Inn was now ministering not only to the workers but to all who desired such service. A special vegetarian number of Unity was issued, February, 1911; and shortly the Unity Pure Food Company, a vegetarian "depot or store," was established so that people might buy proper foods to take the place of meat. In 1906 Mr. Fillmore had tried to give a practical turn to this side of the

¹See Weekly Unity, II (Nov. 24, 1910), 8.

movement by organizing a "New Thought Diet" department in Unity, which he expected to grow into a magazine, but the idea did not materialize. During this period Unity Inn was run on the basis of love offerings--"eat what you like and pay what you please." In February, 1911 Unity announced that the love offerings for this service had netted above expenses two thousand dollars in the previous eight months.