

*This Is the Eleventh in a Series of Twelve Articles Written by the Editors
Of The Christian Century on Successful American Churches
As Named by a Nationwide Poll of Protestant Ministers*

Great Churches of America

XI. Collegiate Methodist, Ames, Iowa

IF YOU HAD happened to pass down the main street of Ames, Iowa, on the first Sunday morning of October 1950, you would have seen a great many people standing on the steps and the broad walk in front of the Collegiate Methodist Church. The gothic building was already full of worshipers attending an early service. This new throng was waiting to enter and take their places. Soon they formed a line two, three and four persons wide. The line quickly grew from the door to the street, down the street past a little restaurant, past a filling station, across a side street and well on into the second block. In fact on this morning the line was shorter than on most Sundays, for hundreds of students from the Iowa State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, which is just across the street, were out of town at a football game.

Some interesting stories are told concerning this weekly spectacle in Ames. One Sunday morning an Iowa State College alumnus drove past. Seeing the crowd, he asked what the excitement was about. He was told that the destination of the queue was not a movie or an athletic contest, but the Methodist church. He was so impressed that he went in and got acquainted. After he had stayed through both services, heard sermons as moving as any he had ever listened to, learned what the church is doing, he sent the pastor a check for \$1,000 to swell its building fund. Since that visit he has written two more checks of equal size and has gone everywhere singing the praises of this church.

A College Community

What would cause a man to do a thing like that? This is not an ordinary congregation. The main concern of the Collegiate Church is to serve its large share of the 10,000 students and 1,000 members of the faculty and staff of the Iowa State College. Year after year about one-fourth of the students write "Methodist" on the card which the college gives them for indicating their religious preference. Such is the popularity of the church that not all these come from Methodist families, but a large proportion do. The churches of this denomination in Iowa are said to have 270,000 members. Many of these live on farms or in villages. Since some children still follow the ways of their fathers, many of the young of Iowa Methodist families come to State College for their education and attend their denomination's leading student church for their soul's good.

They don't choose this church because it is a plush paradise or a religious

country club. As churches go nowadays, Collegiate is on the Spartan side, and Iowa Methodists seem disposed to keep it there. Of the 12 colleges in the commonwealth, exclusive of state schools, this one denomination supports 4. All were founded in the days when every county seat in the newly opened west aspired to become at the same time a center of learning and a profitable real-estate development. Iowa Methodist colleges are Morningside at Sioux City, which now has about 1,100 students; Cornell at Mount Vernon, which attracts 850; Iowa Wesleyan at Mount Pleasant, which draws 500; and Simpson at Indianola, which enrolls 600. In addition the denomination helps support, through Wesley Foundation programs for students, churches at Ames, at Iowa City, where the state university enrolls another 10,000, and at Cedar Falls, where the state teachers' college enrolls 2,500. As if seven ventures into higher education were not enough, some Methodists think the church should set up a Wesley Foundation for its share of the 4,500 students who attend Drake University in Des Moines, a Disciples of Christ school.

Why This Church Succeeds

With such competition within its own denomination, the Collegiate Church at Ames does not receive the outside assistance it deserves and could profitably use. About one-third of its annual budget comes from outside Ames. If its ministry had not been extraordinarily effective, the church would have gone out of existence long ago. Indeed it barely escaped extinction during the thirties—but that is getting ahead of our story. Here it is sufficient to note what this church has that makes it grow in spite of obstacles. This may be summarized in nine points. They show why this student church, the only one of its kind to be named, is entitled to the place among the great churches of America which it was accorded by The Christian Century's poll of 100,000 Protestant ministers.

1. Collegiate Methodist Church at Ames is rendering an outstanding Christian ministry to approximately one-fourth of the students and faculty of a major agricultural and technological college, relying principally on the power of great preaching.

2. It is respected because it practices as well as extols religious liberty and, in spite of differences with university policy at certain points, it contributes to the excellent relations of mutual respect and aid which are traditional between town and gown at Ames, to the equal credit of both.

Collegiate Methodist Church, Ames, Iowa, was chosen in The Christian Century's poll of 100,000 ministers as the church in a medium-sized city in the northwest part of the nation most worthy of study. Included in the balloting in this category were churches in Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Oregon and Washington. Runners-up to the Ames church in the voting were St. Paul Methodist, Lincoln, Nebraska; First Methodist, Colorado Springs, Colorado; St. Paul's Methodist, Cedar Rapids, Iowa; and First Lutheran, Albert Lea, Minnesota.

3. Collegiate Church continuously and systematically works at the task of evangelism, interpreting that mission as not only personal but social as well, and making good use of adversity to advance its cause.

4. It majors on ministry to the young but does not neglect families of faculty people and other permanent residents, and it does so without reducing its presentation of the gospel to an adolescent level or permitting it to soar into the stratosphere of sterile intellectualism.

5. It is doing more to recruit and help train an effective Christian leadership than many a church college.

6. It contributes to the development of an ecumenical Christian fellowship on the campus, in the community and in the wider outreach of the church.

7. It goes a long way to supply students of a technological school with the deep cultural and religious orientation which preoccupation with humanities should but seldom does offer in liberal arts colleges.

8. It conserves and extends the Christian faith of rural Iowa and helps make it at home in the modern world without diminishing its vitality.

9. It dignifies and elevates the highly specialized vocations at which an increasingly large segment of our people work and invests them with the sanctions of Christian ministry.

These are large assertions. They are not claims the Collegiate Church makes for itself, for it would describe its role in more modest terms. But they are claims The Christian Century makes for Collegiate Church and for its minister, Dr. G. S. Nichols, for his associates and for his hundreds of helpers. They are made after a Century editor visited Ames and talked with scores of people in many walks of life. He held many conferences with members of the church staff, with students and professors in State College, with businessmen in the town and farmers in the country. He worshiped at Collegiate Church with great congregations and small groups, saw the church at work through most of a normal week after the opening of the fall term of college, talked with ministers and religious leaders of other churches and groups. What follows is some of the evidence on which these conclusions are based.

I

Ames Collegiate Church has developed a remarkably successful ministry in a constituency including many students by maintaining a consistent Christian concern for persons. This first impression is sound, but to be properly understood it requires a little knowledge of recent history. Fifteen years ago, few would have prophesied that this church would be outstanding today. It was worse than bankrupt. It had a \$140,000 debt, congregations of less than 100, and an overpowering sense of frustration. It was trying to operate on a budget of \$4,500 a year, of which \$35 went to missions and benevolences. In winter the dwindling remnant of the faithful sat shivering in their overcoats in a largely empty sanctuary. The furnace was out of order and the coal bill had not been fully paid since the beginning of the depression. Newcomers who might have been hardy enough to brave the refrigerated atmosphere of the church avoided it for fear of being saddled with a share of what seemed an unpayable debt.

Then G. S. Nichols became pastor, accepting the assign-

ment after two other men had turned it down as impossible. Today most of the 1,500 to 2,000 who worship in Collegiate Church on Sunday remember the dark days of 1935, if they know about them at all, only as background for the luminous present. The debt was paid long ago, much of the money being contributed by Iowa Methodists outside of Ames. In addition, the church has raised and spent \$135,000 for an educational and student activities plant, and it has \$40,000 in sight on the \$200,000 needed for its completion. The latest yearbook of the Iowa-Des Moines conference estimates the present value of the property held by the congregation as \$412,500. Out of an annual operating budget of \$40,000, students last year contributed over \$12,500—a larger sum than is given by any other student group in a Methodist church anywhere. Students also contribute handsomely to the building fund.

How did this happen? Five years after Dr. Nichols became pastor of Collegiate Church a great change was already taking place. Mrs. Hope M. Spence, of *One Foot in Heaven* fame, was in Ames in 1940. She wrote to a friend a letter which was not intended for publication but did get into a Mason City church paper, to her delight. She said:

I wish you could come to see me some Sunday. Your heart would be thrilled to see these students go to church. The church I attend is the Wesley Foundation church on the campus. Even with heartbreakingly and most unwisely inadequate facilities and support, my pastor, Dr. Nichols, does an amazing work with the thousands of Methodist young people here. There is a greater number of Methodist students than of any other denomination and every Sunday the church is crowded with them. The college organist and the college chorus director lead a choir of student voices, so the music is superb.

And Dr. Nichols is a wonderful preacher. His youthful congregation listen to him with absorbed and silent attention. If ever one becomes impatient or unsympathetic with the Wesley Foundation assessments, do try to get him down here for a Sunday. He'll be surprised!

Now, ten years later, a similar letter could be written. A student whom The Christian Century asked concerning the secret of the church's influence pointed across the room to where Dr. Nichols was talking with some young married people. He said: "There is the answer to your question. Dr. Nichols is the secret of this church's greatness." We looked across the room at Dr. Nichols' tall form. His thinning hair is white but 56 years have not stooped his shoulders or dimmed his smile. He still has about him a good deal of the unassuming friendliness of his Missouri background. He grew up on a small farm near Columbia in a family which held membership in a Holiness church. Before the First World War he was a country school teacher for three years, and had not finished high school when he quit and entered the U.S. navy, where he became a pharmacist's mate. While at Quantico, Virginia, he joined the Methodist Church.

After the war, he entered Morningside College and was graduated in 1923. He then studied for a year at Princeton and shifted to Drew Theological Seminary, where he got his bachelor of divinity degree in 1925. "Reverend Nick," as he is universally known in Ames, then went to the University of Missouri, where he studied under the great Charles Elwood and took a master's degree in sociology. "It came to me one day," he said, "that being a Christian

meant following Christ in all these relations." He meant the relations which were opened to him by his study of sociology—war, politics, business and race. The last was particularly difficult because his old border-state prejudices against Negroes were deeply rooted. "In the church where I grew up," he recalls, "we couldn't smoke, dance or wear a tie, but we could help with a lynching. That was all right."

Dr. Nichols' first pastorates were in Sydney and Audubon, Iowa. He came to Ames sixteen years ago. For four years the church could not provide him with a secretary. But he raised the money and got one anyway. One of his first moves, after getting the furnace to work, was to try to interest Negro college students in joining the Collegiate Church. Ever since that time there have been Negroes singing in the choir, serving as ushers and otherwise prominently identified with the congregation. At a sorority function a white girl once told Reverend Nick that she had been so overwhelmed by "the living of Christianity" that when a Negro showed her to a seat she wept as she sat down. Racial distinctions have no place in this church. The Negroes or the 156 foreign students who attended Ames last year are as welcome as anybody. Students of the Wesley Foundation cooperated with others to get the college rules changed so that Negro students could stay at college dormitories and Negro girls could live in the practical home-management houses where all white home economics students receive their training.

This attitude, in which the churches of Ames take a leading part, is shared by many people on the faculty. Joseph Gittler, famous sociology professor on the Iowa State faculty and a member of the American commission of UNESCO, is one of the regular speakers in the Wesley Foundation's Sunday evening series. The Wesley Foundation is sponsoring a D.P., who lives in one of the fraternity houses at Ames. During the depression Reverend Nick sponsored a student cooperative. It began in the parsonage basement, where one student wanted to cook his meals to save money. The one student snowballed up to 13. Soon others wanted to join, so the minister helped the students rent a basement in another house and 30 students came in. Then a second club was started and a whole house was rented. The club quickly became international. Negroes, Chinese and Jews were among those who lived together. At first there was some opposition, but the official board stood behind Reverend Nick and finally the people came around. Eventually many of them were proud that the church had some part in this. These eating clubs were disbanded during the war and have not been revived.

Reverend Nick's greatest strength lies in the winsomeness of his preaching. His personal relations are consistent with a deeply committed life and underscore the sincerity of his manner. But his impact on successive student generations at Iowa State College attains its greatest force when he stands, a tall figure in black gown, in the pulpit of Collegiate Church. Then he becomes a prairie Savonarola preaching with power the unsearchable riches of Christ. His resonant voice is edged with emotion. His eyes never release the congregation for a single instant. He *delivers* his sermon, planting it squarely in the soul of each hearer.

After listening to him, one is not surprised to learn that Dr. Nichols writes out his sermons with the greatest care,

spending hours on them every week. He memorizes every phrase and preaches the sermon over to himself before he delivers it from the pulpit. But when he preaches, it is from his heart to the hearts of the listeners. "The unpardonable sin of the pulpit is dullness," he wrote in the March 1950 issue of the *Garrett Tower* (a publication of the Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Illinois).

II

A second element in the strength of the Collegiate Church is its maintenance of a free pulpit. By its sturdy insistence on the practice of religious liberty it is serving the highest traditions of American Protestantism. Its officers know that Dr. Nichols is a pacifist. They also know that not a great many of his church members follow him in this view. But his official board and a large majority of his parishioners insist that he shall be free to state his conviction. He takes them at their word.

Early in the Second World War he preached a sermon boldly entitled, "I Am Still a Pacifist." He had 2,000 copies printed and kept them in the church foyer for distribution. During the war he also displayed and distributed 10,000 copies of a sermon he had preached some time before, giving reasons for opposing our entry into the conflict. Since hundreds of Navy V12 sailors were being trained at the college and about 200 of them sat in front of him every Sunday, the minister's stand aroused opposition. A few people left his church after staging a determined but unsuccessful effort to have the church repudiate him. There was a conscientious objectors' camp near by and a number of its inmates sang in the choir. Several boys from the church went to prison for their stand against war, and perhaps a score of others were in Civilian Public Service camps. Reverend Nick mixed conscientious objectors and conscientious fighters, took the navy boys to visit the C.P.S. camp and the C.P.S. men to visit the navy. There was no conflict between these conscientious young men, but older people complained. The minister stood his ground. When a church member protested against having C.P.S. boys in the choir, Reverend Nick replied: "What's the difference between a conscientious objector in the choir and a conscientious objector in the pulpit?"

Matters came to a head when the American Legion sought to get signatures to petitions for the passage of a universal military training law and a campus group was formed to oppose conscription. The Memorial Union, a meeting place for all kinds of college organizations, was closed to the group opposing conscription, so the Collegiate Methodist pastor invited them to foregather in the church. When Kirby Page found college meeting places closed to him, he also was welcomed at the church. Then 50 Legionnaires came to the church to heckle an anti-conscription meeting. Reverend Nick sturdily insisted that the anticonscription forces must be permitted to organize and that there be a free debate on the merits of the issue. They were organized, and the Legionnaires heckled the speakers, but did not break up the meeting, as some had threatened to do.

Today in the college faculty there is still the same firm resistance to Reverend Nick's ideas, but nobody any longer questions his right to hold and express them. Members of

the faculty are also members of the church board and take pride in the fact that Collegiate Methodist stands for a free pulpit and religious liberty. Of these precious things Reverend Nick has become something of a symbol. At the same time, his modest bearing and his complete willingness to accord to the other man the freedom he claims for himself strengthens the fine relations of mutual aid and respect that have long prevailed between Iowa State College and the community of Ames. The Christian Century knows of no situation where there is a church college in which relations between community and college are more generous, sympathetic and wholesome than they are at Ames, whose college is state-supported, not church-supported.

III

A third factor in the success of Collegiate Church is its program of personal and social evangelism. Without it the church could not continuously renew its life, as it does in a situation where there is inevitably a high turnover in constituency. Iowa State operates on the quarter system. And so Collegiate Methodist has a new evangelistic effort every three months. Mary Baird, who appears on the church bulletin as a parish visitor, is the church's active secretary of evangelism. She is eminently fitted for a task in which she deeply believes. A former missionary of the United Presbyterian Church in Egypt and later a high school teacher and college dean, Miss Baird lives with her sister, a teacher in the Ames public schools.

In every home she finds "people hungry for the love and fellowship of the church." She is a constant visitor at Pammel Court, a trailer camp where young married couples who attend State College live. To her they are "wonderfully kind and responsive." She often discovers that young husbands and wives are divided in their church loyalties, but gets them to join some church together—Collegiate Methodist, if they choose, but if not, another church in Ames. Miss Baird has a membership chairman in each of the women's circles of the church. "Methodists are organized to the hilt, so it is easy to find a job for everybody, no matter how many you take in," she says. For each new member she gets an older member to act as sponsor and counselor until the newcomer is at home and active in the church.

New members, says Dr. Nichols, are requested to attend a membership class for six sessions, "even if they have been Methodists for forty years." This fall a class of about 100 prospective members began the study of what it means to be a good Christian and a useful member of the Methodist Church.

The membership committee sends people out two by two to call on prospective members. Twenty teams went out the week The Christian Century was studying the Collegiate Church. Each pair of visitors was given the addresses of five persons, each of whom had received a letter saying that the team was coming. The church brings in an average of 150 new full members a year, and 100 to 125 affiliate or student members. Last year 41 infants and 26 adults were baptized, and 27 adults were received on confession of faith and 91 by transfer of membership. Thus evangelism is a staff operation carried on continuously,

involving a good many members of the church and headed by a lay committee.

The student members also go out by twos to visit prospective members in the campus community. They have their own organization, headed by a student council of 21, and it carries on a program as large and intensive as that of the rest of the church. This year the Wesley Foundation had enrolled 52 students in church membership classes by October 24, secured pledges of \$10,000 for support and enlisted 71 students in its program. An average of 185 students are present at the church on Sunday evenings. And almost every night of the year committees and groups meet in every nook and corner of the church.

Evangelism here is social as well as personal. Every week 25 or 30 students come together at the church for what is called a "meager meal." They eat scraps or leftovers, the money thus saved going to the World Student Christian relief fund. If the Sunday evening students' club has had such good appetite that nothing is left, the group collects day-old bakery bread, stale rolls and other cheap food. The American Friends Service Committee is the prime mover in this "meager meal" project, but people in the church participate in it and many think it is a church enterprise. Once it was led by "big shot" campus personalities and attracted large numbers. Now it is supported by the devoted work of steady, week-by-week pluggers, who in a year manage to collect a considerable sum.

But here again our account is incomplete without reference to Reverend Nick and the impact of his Sunday morning sermons. The Christian Century asked a number of students what the Collegiate Church means to them. A typical reply was: "The messages of Reverend Nick have challenged me to find a worthwhile way of life. He talks on a level with the majority of his congregation, who are college students. The atmosphere of the church has moved many a student from religious apathy to a vital and functioning life. Wherever I may go in life, I will always look upon this church as the high point in my college career." Another wrote: "One year here in the work of Collegiate Methodist has given me a faith and knowledge leading me into the world as a Christian to profess what I believe and to help others to find their Savior too."

In all this vigorous outreach, Collegiate Methodist Church is an example of the truth of Shakespeare's "Sweet are the uses of adversity." Because it is confronted by an enormous opportunity and because it lacks financial resources, Collegiate Methodist has been compelled to include a considerable part of the state of Iowa in its parish. Its ministers reach out to a great many of the Methodist churches of Iowa. Student deputation teams make dozens of visits to churches in a year. Student members of the Collegiate Church, on their return home, tell its story. This long sustained and persistent effort has had the effect of making the church very widely and favorably known. This would not have been possible if the program which is carried on at Ames were not so significant in itself. But because it is, the efforts of the church to find support are accounted to it for righteousness.

Supplementing these efforts is a continuous mail circularization of the churches telling about the work of

Collegiate Methodist. Letters invite the churches to call on this church for any services it can render. The Wesley Foundation's Chevrolet probably pays for itself several times over every year because it increases the mobility of the active young people of Collegiate Methodist. With the current shortage of ministers, the Wesley Foundation at the church is taking full responsibility for one church which does not have a pastor and is helping others.

Lack of financial resources also compels the leadership of the church to make sure that every last person who can cooperate is doing it. So in a church with about 300 families, about 300 families contribute to the budget, and this fall 255 students answered the first call that they also contribute. Both the church members and the student groups organize teams to canvass for financial cooperation as well as for membership. It is an interesting fact that the largest single weekly contribution to the church budget is made by a student who lives in a very unprepossessing abode in the near-by trailer camp. This student, like many others in the church, is a tither. The church so thoroughly extends itself that there is no room in its membership for free-riders. And its program is so worth while that few try to escape their financial responsibility.

IV

Collegiate Methodist's fourth claim to distinction will have to be set down largely as an aspiration based on a partial achievement, rather than as an accomplished fact. The religious education program of this church suffers most severely because of the lack of adequate facilities. For 25 years the church has had a spacious and beautiful sanctuary. But it had to depend for space for its Sunday school upon the large open basement of that structure. Recently it completed the first part of the student center, which provides accommodations for a few more large classes. But most classes are still held in the midst of a great hubbub. They are surrounded by portable screens, through which sound passes readily. It is a tribute to the determination of the church to give its young some kind of religious education that through the year it has an average attendance of about 200 in the Sunday school, to which should be added around 50 officers and teachers. This is about one-fourth of all who are enrolled.

However, the church is seriously trying to improve its program. To that end, it recently engaged Louis W. Hilbert, Jr., as director of music and Christian education. Mr. Hilbert was trained as a public school teacher and is an accomplished musician. He has degrees in both fields. He spent over four years in Civilian Public Service during World War II, following which he did Methodist student work and engaged in further study at Pacific School of Religion. He says: "I am convinced that the church needs more full-time laymen in its service. I am remaining a layman and bearing a layman's witness here in education and music. The field of student work fascinates me particularly. I believe firmly in the ecumenical movement as being the present expression of the ultimate goal of Jesus Christ throughout the world, and I seem to sense that the growth of the church along ecumenical lines is to be found in the student field in almost every denomination."

The Sunday evening program of the Wesley Founda-

tion supplements the other work of the church in the field of religious education. Betty Jean Clark is director of student work. She is a minister's daughter and a product of Wesley Foundation work. Every student with whom The Christian Century talked at Ames expressed affection for Mrs. Clark and admiration for this aspect of the life of the church. One student said: "I feel that I could go to the church for counsel and guidance in any problem that I may have. Collegiate Methodist has given me a faith that no other church has. It talks my language and answers my problems in a practical way." Another said: "The Wesley Foundation and the work that it offers in Christian leadership and service has made me a real Christian." The chancel choir of 129 is largely composed of students, who value the excellent training they receive as well as the opportunity of rendering a Christian service.

V

Another important reason why Collegiate Church is deeply rooted in the affections of Iowa Methodists is its part in raising up men and women for full-time Christian service. So far this year it has 22 students who are aiming at some kind of church-related vocation. Ames is recognized as one of the best places for training people for agricultural missions. There are six students in the group this year who are planning to enter the ministry. Others are expected to make their decision during the year, as their predecessors have done every year before them. Iowa State College has had among its presidents two ministers, and its atmosphere is still warmly friendly to the church. The Christian Century talked with one young man and his wife who are thinking of studying to be medical missionaries. The young man is about to graduate from Iowa State College's course of veterinary medicine; his wife teaches languages and music. They have already opened correspondence with a mission board concerning entering a medical school when he has finished at State. Wesley Foundation deputation work often leads to full-time Christian service.

Students who are interested along this line can find courses at Iowa State College which help them in their training. The college has two professors of religious education. Roy LeMoine, an Episcopalian who was formerly a navy chaplain, has the title of "director of religious life and professor of religious education." Students in technical vocational training value these courses because they feel the need to keep their Christian training on a par with what they learn in school. Through Wesley Foundation services and the other services available at the church, plus those available at the college and in the community generally, they have far more opportunity to do this than do students in most schools. Again the fact that the attitude of Iowa State College has traditionally and consistently been favorable to religion plays a very important part. So the growth of Christian leadership in Collegiate Church and at Ames generally is a natural process. President Charles E. Friley of Iowa State College is the son of a Baptist minister. The department heads of the school are all more than nominal Christians and many of them are leaders in their local churches. In the home economics department young women are taught to set up homes

whose spirit is Christian. The training in the field of science at Iowa State is not hostile to Christianity.

Formerly Iowa State College had its own chaplain and religious services. For many years attendance was required. But with the rise of church student foundations in the last generation this has changed. The college still has its courses in religion and philosophy, its baccalaureate sermon, and official prayers on great occasions. But the rise of the church foundations around the campus has caused some shift in emphasis. That this has been done with entire good will on both sides is a great tribute to all concerned. One reason why the transfer has been possible is that the churches in Ames are large, substantial and well staffed. The college has not had to deal with a multitude of small, weak and quarreling groups.

VI

Collegiate Methodist is favorably known outside the denomination because it contributes its important share to the development of an ecumenical Christian fellowship on the campus and in the community. There is a ministerial fellowship in Ames, of which Dr. Nichols is a member. On the college campus there is a student organization known as the Interfaith Council. There is also a campus Christian workers' group, which serves the purpose of a council on religion. Good cooperation marks the relations between Protestants and Catholics here. The number of Jewish students is small. Roman Catholic priests attend the campus Christian workers' association meetings and accept committee responsibility. After the quadrennial conference of the Student Christian Movement, which was held at Lawrence, Kansas, two years ago, an ecumenical conference was held at Ames. Catholic students participated.

Other churches, in addition to the Roman Catholic, which are generally noncooperative, are cooperative at Iowa State College. For example, the local representative of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is an active member of the campus Christian workers' group.

An incomplete count of the religious preference cards signed by students for the first quarter of the 1950-51 school year gave the following figures: Methodist, 1,930; Congregational, 400; Presbyterian, 978; Roman Catholic, 730; Lutheran, 905; Baptist, 325; Disciples of Christ, 310; Episcopalian, 230; Jewish, less than 50. There were several Mormons, Pentecostals and members of other groups.

VII

Still another element in the success of Collegiate Church is the way it is managing to supply students of a technological school with the cultural and religious orientation which is usually held to be the monopoly of the liberal arts college. One student put it this way: "I find the Collegiate Church a place to worship and grow in living while I acquire a technical knowledge of agriculture. It helps me to learn how an experiment or basic scientific fact fits into the history of time and my life. It supplies the key to my effort at harmonizing scientific fact with the social laws which come down through the ages. Through the church I find fellowship and I find God through worship."

What better testimony could be given to the ministry of religion to science or to the role of the church in leading

its members to an integrated and living faith? Of course the church cannot supply all the riches that come from a sustained study of the humanities, but this church at least is truly pointing its members to the attitude of mind without which those riches cannot be found. It supplies, as this student said, the key to an understanding of one's relation to history and of the proper place of science in the total scheme of things. That is no mean service.

VIII

Closely allied to this service is Collegiate Church's way of lifting up into full fellowship of Christian ministry the specialized vocations which constitute the main subject matter at Iowa State College as well as the principal way in which millions in our day serve. The eminent botanist who is head of the committee on pastoral relations and staff personnel and also chief usher in Collegiate Church once considered entering the full-time service of the church. Now he is high in his profession, but he does not try to isolate these professional activities from his religious interests. In the classroom as well as in his church activities he is a minister of the Lord of life. This point of view comes close to the idea of the priesthood or mutual ministry of all believers which dominated the early Christian church and has repeatedly come to the surface during and since the Reformation. It fits very naturally into the work of Collegiate Methodist Church and the atmosphere of Iowa State College.

IX

Enough has been said to make it unnecessary for us to do more than state a final conclusion concerning Collegiate Church. Along with other churches which serve the college community in Ames, it is conserving and extending the Christian faith of rural Iowa. Its leaders know what is going on in the world. They realize that in many places the attitude so commonly found among students in Ames would be regarded as unsophisticated. But they also know enough of the results of what is considered sophistication to value sincerity and wholesomeness and to do their best to conserve these attitudes. Nobody here considers it smart deliberately to wreck a student's faith or to belittle the convictions which have placed the stamp of integrity on the character of American life. On the contrary, in Collegiate Church and in the college every effort is made to take the sterling spiritual capital which they have been given by the Christian homes of Iowa and invest it so that it will bring forth a hundredfold. "A charge to keep I have" might be sung by many faculty members at Ames, as well as by the ministers and members of Collegiate Church. And one has only to share their common aspirations and purposes in a week of the activities of this church to realize how much they mean in the building of a successful church.

Victims

O PITY not the soldier dead who lie
In quiet tombs—poor, cheated sons of fate;
But pity us who still hear war fiends cry,
Who look upon a world still rife with hate.

THOMAS CURTIS CLARK.