

## New Year's Eve at A. M. E. Church.

Written for the Republican.

Of the many happy holiday gatherings in the capital city one of the most joyous and important was the mingled throng of old and young which crowded the little old African M. E. church west of Pine street, between Michigan avenue and Ottawa streets, on new year's eve.

About the middle of April last, under the inspiration of some members of the Y. M. C. A. of this city, a Sunday school was organized at this place for the benefit of all who wished to study the bible in concert, irrespective of age, sex, or previous condition of servitude. Non-sectarian, it was in fact a mission school and adopted the national series of lessons as its line of study. The school made choice of H. N. Lawrence for superintendent, Mrs. John Scott assistant superintendent, James Thompson secretary and Mrs. Geo. E. Washington treasurer. The entire number in attendance at the first session was 34, including visitors.

From Sunday to Sunday at 3 o'clock P. M., the little band has quietly gathered there,—not at sound of church-bell, for they have none, but the gathering of themselves together has not been forsaken for lack of invitation from Mrs. L. J. Hill and Mrs. Henry W. Walker, two of its most earnest, self-denying teachers, to whom more than any others the school owes its pleasant entertainment on new year's eve.

It was their design to have loaded a Christmas tree for the little ones, but the reasons that deferred such action in other schools prompted them to delay the holiday festival to the last night in the year. Early in the evening the little house was full of happy, expectant faces, and joyfully they sang from Gospel hymns Nos. 1 and 3. At 8 o'clock the blessing of the universal Father was invoked by the superintendent, and then all united in singing several pieces, led by the organ, played by Miss Ella Baker. Then followed some volunteer recitations from the smaller scholars, all the more interesting because they were without a labored programme or preparation. Little Charlie Manly (so small that to be seen he must needs be lifted upon a box in the middle of the room) hardly understood the laugh which followed his transposition of pronouns in the verse of the old nursery rhyme which he recited as follows:

"How much better I'm attended  
Than the Son of God could be,  
When from heaven I descended  
And became a child like He."

The report of the secretary was listened to with satisfaction, and commended by some not members of the school. From it we learn that the school has a membership of 71 scholars, as follows:

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Class No. 1, H. N. Lawrence, teacher, 20; No. 2, Mrs. L. J. Hill, 26; No. 3, Mrs. Henry W. Walker, 12; No. 4, Mrs. Ellen Baker, 7; No. 5, Miss B. Brown, 6. The average attendance for eight months has been, for class No. 1, 10; No. 2, 11; No. 3, 8; No. 4, 5; and No. 5, 4.

The collections of the schools for the same time have amounted to \$22.23. At the Sunday school convention of the city schools in June last, the superintendent solicited a contribution from each for the purpose of purchasing an organ for this school. Several of the city Sunday schools generously responded, and with the funds thus contributed, together with what the mission school had been able to bring in, the superintendent had purchased a Taylor & Farley five-octave organ, which was presented without incumbrance to the school as a new year's gift.

Once more Miss Baker led the happy school in singing the piece entitled, "Are you coming home to-night," and then the distribution from the loaded evergreen at the desk, with the plates of cake and confectionery and warm coffee for all, so occupied those present that none took note of the passing time, and we think the watch meeting which followed the festival must have been short indeed.

Many thanks we tender to those who so generously aided us in contributions to our organ fund, and for the bountiful supply of cake and confectionery furnished, many glad hearts and voices bless the hands which gave so liberally of their good things.

H.

Lansing, Jan. 7, 1879.