

# SURPRISED.

Magnificent Gift to the Pres-  
byterian Church.

A MODERN TEN THOUSAND DOLLAR  
PARSONAGE,

Supposed to be Chas. G. Hart's  
New Residence,

Presented to the Presbyterian Trus-  
tees Monday Afternoon,

By the Heirs of the Late Samuel E.  
Hart Estate.

Monday, November 11, 1895, is a day  
long to be remembered by the Presby-  
terian church society, of this city.

For many weeks Adrian residents have noticed the progress in the erection on Dennis street of one of the most handsome modern residences. It was to be on completion, as nearly everyone supposed, the elegant home of Mr. and Mrs. Chas. G. Hart. But such it seems was not the intention of those who knew and understood.

Yesterday afternoon there gathered at the new house on invitation a company of friends, the board of trustees, their wives and others, who supposed there was to be a "house warming" or something of the kind for Mr. and Mrs. Hart, not expecting in the least the great surprise that was awaiting them.

Shortly after 4 o'clock Judge Norman Geddes called the company together in the parlors and hall and asked Judge Lane to act as chairman. Mr. Geddes, as a friend and attorney of the heirs of Samuel E. Hart, deceased, then made the following remarks:

*Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, and especially the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church:*

Permit me to claim your attention for a few minutes.

For more than half a century there resided in this city a man whose name was a synonym for those qualities and characteristics, integrity, industry, promptness, caution and economy, so desirable and necessary for the achievement of success in business. By the exercise of these virtues, he succeeded in acquiring a competency where others, working equally hard, but lacking these, or some of these characteristics, have failed.

Becoming a member of the First Presbyterian church of this city in early life, his love, interest and attachment to the church of his choice continued to increase with his advancing years. His was not of a demonstrative nature, and while his contributions to charitable and worthy objects which commended themselves to his approval, were liberal and frequent, they were never ostentatiously made. In this as in other things, he obeyed the scripture, "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." But long before his death he confided to his wife his desire and intention to purchase for the church a dwelling suitable for a parsonage; and often while riding about the city, consulted her as to the desirability of different houses for that purpose. But death, as it so often does, came too soon and his long cherished plan was not carried out.

The man whose portrait I have in part attempted to draw, you have already recognized as that of Samuel E. Hart, who departed this life on the 22d day of October, 1892. His manner of life is known to you all.

He died intestate, leaving no record of his plans or wishes relative to the purchase of a parsonage. But his widow and children, desiring to carry out his plans and wishes, and failing to find such a house as in their judgment, would be suitable for the purpose, purchased this lot and erected this beautiful dwelling, as a memorial of their deceased husband and father, which they now request me to present to the First Presbyterian church society of Adrian. And it now gives me great pleasure to present to you as representatives of the church, a deed in fee simple, duly executed and acknowledged, from Harriet G. Hart, the widow, Mrs. Kate Hart Elmer, the daughter, and Chas. G. Hart, the son, and Mary Virginia Hart, his wife, to the First Presbyterian church society of Adrian, with an abstract of the title to the premises, showing the title to be perfect and free from all encumbrances.

For reasons satisfactory to themselves, that there may be no misunderstanding as to the intention of these grantors, and that the ownership of this property may never be called in question, they have procured this silver tablet and caused to be inscribed thereon these words:

Parsonage  
of  
the First Presbyterian church  
of  
Adrian.  
A memorial  
of  
Samuel E. Hart, deceased.  
Presented by  
his heirs.  
1895.

The architect and builder, Mr. Matthes, who merits the highest praise for his excellent work, will now place the tablet in position, and it only requires your acceptance of the gift to vest the title in the church society.

Mr. Matthes, as the speaker said the final words, ascended the stairs and placed in position in an oak frame at the landing of the stairs the silver tablet. The plate which is of solid silver was engraved by Tiffany, of New York.

What an impression this unexpected announcement made. The surprise was almost overwhelming and for a moment there was silence. When the company had recovered somewhat, Chairman Lane called on John Kirby, chairman of the board of trustees, for a few words. In behalf of the board he thanked the donors for their most kind gift and formally accepted the deed of the property from Judge Geddes.

Hon. A. L. Millard, a member of the session, then spoke. He assured them that he had no expectation of the event, yet it didn't surprise him much when he remembered from whom the gift came. The church society owes a debt of gratitude to the donors. The members of the church will never, can never fail to remember Samuel E. Hart, and will recognize this as a gift which is worthy of him and the donors. It supplies a long felt want.

Rev. W. K. Spencer, pastor of the church, was then called upon. He said there was no one who could feel more surprised and no one who could feel that it was more natural. He stood in a peculiar and glad place. He said he esteemed it one of the many pleasures of the past ten years that he had gained the acquaintance of the late Samuel E. Hart, who was not known at his full worth by the majority. He was a man who was doing a great deal more good in a quiet way than many gave him credit for. This gift is for the church of which he had the honor of being pastor. He hoped that as pastor he would have the pleasure of enjoying this beautiful place for a time. As others he had been greatly surprised. He esteemed the man and still esteemed the memory of him. So unostentatious a man as he was had to be known intimately to be known at all. To the widow, to the daughter, to the sister and to the son he expressed gratitude.

Judge V. H. Lane said he hadn't quite recovered his breath, such had been his surprise. He had very pleasant recollections of Samuel E. Hart. Upon this occasion, he said, he had only to commiserate those for whom the handsome home had, according to many, for so long been intended. He was very glad to join and speak the thanks of the church and society to those from whom the gift comes directly.

As the company all joined heartily in singing "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," for everyone could sing it from the depths of their hearts, tear drops shone in the eyes of many, making it still more impressive, and the house was, as it were, dedicated then and there

to the service of God, as the dwelling of one of His servants.

Rev. W. K. Spencer then offered a fervent and earnest prayer to God, thanking him for his great kindness and beseeching him to rest his everlasting blessing on the generous donors of the munificent gift.

The company then dispersed to wander leisurely through the large and spacious halls and parlors.

The new parsonage, as it is now, is a handsome, modern frame house, located at 35 Dennis street. The finish of the interior is a dream of beautiful workmanship and the plan for convenience is an architect's study. From a tiled vestibule one passes into a large hallway; leading from this is a broad stairway to the upper floor. To the left opens a pleasant parlor, and the sitting room opens just off from this. Both rooms are finished in cherry. The dining room is connected with the sitting room with folding doors. The finish of the dining room is red oak, the polished floor and wainscoting being both of the same material. A pressed wood border of artistic design extends around the wainscoting. The study or library which is on this floor is also finished in oak. A large and fully equipped kitchen with hot and cold water faucets, a large range and a refrigerator is ready for occupancy.

On the second floor the two front sleeping rooms are finished in quartered sycamore. There are also on this floor three bedrooms including the servant's room, a large linen closet, and a bath room with the finest of fixtures. In the basement is a large furnace. It is divided into a laundry, vegetable room and coal room. The whole house is piped for gas, furnished with beautiful gas fixtures and wired for electricity. The house, as it was presented yesterday, is worth \$10,000.

The success in keeping the matter such a profound secret is remarkable and the whole affair was one of the best planned and most complete surprises that probably ever has been carried out in this city.

Of the magnificent gift and the whole-souled generosity of the donors' words fail in expressing them. On every hand one hears words of praise for the action of the donors in bestowing such a munificent gift on the Presbyterian church society.

## LOOKING FORWARD.

*(Continued from Page Fourteen.)*

One of the most modern and finest homes in the city was recently completed at No. 35 Dennis street, supposedly for Charles G. Hart, which it was thought Mr. Hart and his young bride would occupy. It contains eleven rooms and can be lighted by either gas or electricity. The various rooms are finished in cherry, oak, sycamore and pine. In architectural construction, finish and conveniences, every detail has been taken. In fact, in every respect it is one of the most modern houses in the city. When it was completed and ready to be turned over to Mr. Hart by the contractor, C. F. Matthes, a number of prominent people, especially the board of trustees and members of the Presbyterian church, were invited to the home. as they supposed, for a house warming. Their surprise can better be imagined than described, when after being shown through the elegant apartments, Judge Norman Geddes, in a brief address in behalf of Mr. Hart, wife and sister, and their mother, widow of the late Samuel E. Hart, one of Adrian's wealthiest citizens, presented the new building to the Presbyterian church for a parsonage. The matter had been kept so quiet it was a surprise to everybody—one of the most pleasant ones of the season. The building and grounds cost \$10,000, and constitute the handsomest parsonage in the state for a city of this size. Full details of this elegant gift were given in THE TELEGRAM, Tuesday, November 12, the next issue after the occurrence.