

MINUTES

of

General Conference

of the

Brethren in Christ,

(*EVER BRETHREN*.)

Florin, Lancaster County,
Pennsylvania,

May 20, 21, 22, 1903.

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(RIVER BRETHERN,)

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Pennsylvania,**

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Brethren in Christ,

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE. 1903.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 20.

- 9:00 a.m.—One hour devotional exercises.
- 10:00 “ Conference opened.
- 11:30 “ Conference adjourned for noon meal.
- 12:30 p.m. Thirty minutes devotional exercises led by Bro. Jno. Sider, Wainfleet, Ont.
- 1:00 “ Conference reconvened.
- 5:30 “ Conference adjourned.
- 7:30 “ Preaching by Eld. Jno. Smith, Smithville, O. and Isaac Baker, Notawa, Ont.

THURSDAY, MAY 21.

- 7:30 a.m. Devotional exercises led by Samuel Haugh Glendale, Arizona.
- 8:30 “ Conference reconvened,
- 11:30 “ Conference adjourned for

noon meal.

- 12:30 p.m. Devotional exercises led by Bro. S. G. Engle, by Phila. Pa.
- 1:00 “ Conference reconvened.
- 5:30 “ Conference adjourned.
- 7:30 p.m. Preaching by Eld. J. A. Stump, Nappanee, Ind. and Bro. H. L. Trump, Polo Ill.

FRIDAY, MAY 22.

- 7:30 a.m. Devotional exercises, led by Bro. Samuel Whisler, Ashland, O.
- 8:30 “ Conference reconvened.
- 11:30 “ Conference adjourned for noon meal.
- 12:30 p.m. Devotional exercises, led by Bro. Jos. Burkhart, Mowersville, Pa.
- 1:00 “ Conference reconvened.
- 5:00 “ Conference adjourned for meal.
- 6:00 “ Conference reconvened.
- 7:20 “ Conference adjourned to meet at Staynor, Ont. on 3 rd. Wednesday, of May, 1904.

Minutes of General CONFERENCE of Brethren in Christ. 1903.

General Conference of Brethren in Christ convened at Cross Roads Meeting House, Florin, Lancaster Co. Pa., May 20, 21 and 22, 1903, and opened with a season of devotional exercises lasting about one hour; after which Conference formally opened at 10, A. M. with prayer, followed by the retiring Moderator Eld. M. H. Oberholtser giving an outline of the method of organization, and appointed the Brethren A. B. Musser, A. H. Engle and Danl. B. Brubaker a committee to proceed with the election of Moderators, which resulted as follows: Moderator, Eld. M. H. Oberholtser; 1 st. Asst. Eld. Samuel Zook; 2 nd. Asst. Eld. W. O. Baker.

The Moderators elect then appointed the brethren Harvey Fry. Reading Clerk; S. R. Smith, Secy., and D. V. Heisey, Asst. Secy.

The Moderator then read 2nd. Peter, 1 st. Chapter, which was followed by touching and appropriate remarks by the assistants, especially admonishing members of Conference to exercise love and wisdom in their deliberations, that peace and order may be sustained.

The Districts were then called in consecutive order and delegates enrolled their names as follows:

Silverdale Dist., and Phila., Pa.— Eld. Jos. B. Detwiler, Peter Stover and Jac. Bowers.

Manor Dist., Pa.— Eld. Henry L. Heisey, Eli M. Engle Noah Hess.

Rapho Dist., Pa.— Eld. H. B. Hofer, Danl. Wolgemuth, A. M. Sheets.

Donegal Dist., Pa.— Eld. Aaron Martin, Jno. M. Wolgemuth, Abr. Z. Hess.

Dauphin and Lebanon Dist., Pa.— Eld. Jac. K. Kreider, Jac. Books.

Cumberland Dist., Pa.— Eld. Jonathan Wert, Jno. B. Niesley.

N. Franklin Dist., Pa.— Eld. M. H. Oberholtser, J. L. Snoke, Jas. Burkhardt.

S. Franklin Dist., Pa.— Samuel Wingert, H. H. Heisey.

Lykens Valley Dist., Pa.— J. D. Keefer.

Morrison's Cove and Centre Co. Dist., Pa.— Eld. Isaac Stern.

Juniata Dist., Pa.— Solomon Lauver.

Dayton Dist., O.— Eld. B. F. Hoover, Eld. J. A. Stump.

Stark Co. Dist., O.— Eld. W. O. Baker.

Wayne Co. Dist., O.— No delegate.
Ashland and Richmond Dist., O.— Samuel Whisler.

Elkhart Dist., Ind.— Eld. J. A. Stump.

Polo Dist., Ill.— H. L. Trump.
Whitsside Co. Dist., Ill.— No delegate.

Shannon Dist., Ill.— No delegate.
Dallas Centre Dist., Iowa.— H. H. Garwick.

Des Moines, Iowa.— Max Mahler.
N. Dickinson Dist., Kas.— B. F. Engle, Harvey Fry.

S. Dickinson Dist., Kas.— B. B. Engle, Henry Landis.

Brown Co. Kas.— No delegate.
Arizona Mission,— Samuel Haugh.
California Mission,— No delegate.
Black Creek Dist., Ont. and Clarence Centre, N. Y.— Jno. Sider.
Nattawa Dist., Ont.— Isaac Baker.

Markham Dist., Ont.— Eld. H. R. Heise, Peter Steckly.

Carland Mission,— No delegate.
Waterloo Dist., Ont.— Eld. Jno. Wildfong.

The petitions and resolutions for consideration in Gen. Conference were read and filed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

S. R. Smith of the Hymn Book Com. continued from Conference of 1902 reported as follows:

Total amount of Hymn Books sold . . .	\$906.70
Total amount of expenses including printing, freight ect.,	847.18

Bal. in hand of S. R. Smith for Com. . . . \$59.52

Art. 1. A petition from Penna. State Council, asking to change the method of Conference proceedings for this and following Conference, until otherwise

arranged, to consider general church work first and all Mission work to be reported to the proper Mission Boards for inspection who shall arrange and report to Conference for approval or rejection instead of considering Mission work first and and general church work last as in late Conference, was granted.

Art. 2. Eld. Aaron Martin was appointed to fill the vacancy caused by the retirement of Eld. Samuel Zook from the Examining Committee.

Art. 3. Eld. W. O. Baker was appointed to fill the vacancy, of the unexpired term caused by the death of Eld. Henry Davidson, and Bro. Daniel Climenhaga, retiring member, was appointed to succeed himself on the Standing Committee.

Art. 4. Eld. J. N. Engle was appointed to fill the vacancy, on the Operative Foreign Mission Board, caused by the death of Eld. Henry Davidson.

Art. 5. Bro. H. L. Trump was appointed to fill the vacancy, on the General Foreign Mission Board, caused by the death of Bro. H. L. Shirk.

Art. 6. Bro. Jac. Ulery was appointed, for this Conference, to serve on the Gen. Foreign Mission Board, in the absence of Bro. A. M. Engle.

Art. 7. Eld. J. K. Kreider was appointed to serve for this Conference, on the Operative Foreign Mission Board in place of Eld. J. N. Engle's absence, who was appointed under Art. 4.

Art. 8. Bro. C. S. Brenner was appointed to fill the vacancy on the General Mission Executive Board, caused by the death of Bro. J. B. Myers.

Art. 9. S. R. Smith, appointed by Conference of 1902 to assist in moving the Ev. Visitor from Abilene, Kas. to Harrisburg, Pa., reported the cost of moving type, cases ect., belonging to the Visitor, and Freight on household goods and ear fare for Bro. Detwiler and family \$164.89; and received from the different Districts of Penna., \$100 20, leaving a balance in favor of S. R. Smith of \$64.69.

Art. 10. On motion decided that the amount of \$59.52 in the hands of S. R. Smith from the Hymn Book Committee shall be paid towards the

balance of \$64.69 due S. R. Smith for moving of EVAN. VISITOR.

Art. 11. On motion decided that sufficient Conference Minutes be printed for this Conference, and hereafter, that each member of the Church can be supplied with a copy, and that the Officials of the various Districts throughout the Church shall see that a sufficient number is ordered and properly distributed so that each member of the various Districts shall receive a copy; the cost of the minutes to be paid out of the general treasury of each District.

Art. 12. A petition from Pennsylvania State Council asking permission and authority to have the church organization incorporated according to law, under the name of The Brethren in Christ, either by districts or for the State of Pennsylvania, was granted, with the provision that the Church in Pennsylvania shall proceed in the matter as will be considered most expedient by the Church in Pennsylvania.

Art. 13. A petition to investigate

whether Art. 18, of Conference Minutes of 1878 has been complied with, and whether charges which were preferred could be sustained, was considered. An explanation was given by the person in question, and on motion decided, that by virtue of his confession, he is fully vindicated.

Art. 14. A petition to formulate a Conference index wherein the different subjects which were considered at the different Conferences, that are on record, shall be alphabetically arranged with references designating the different articles under which each subject appears, was granted.

Art. 15. Brethren Geo. Detwiler, Eli. M. Engie and S. R. Smith were appointed a committee to formulate a Conference index as implied under Art. 14, of this Conference.

Art. 16. The committee appointed by Conference of 1902 under Art. 49, reported that love and peace is to a certain extent restored.

Art. 17. Elders B. F. Hoover and Jno. A. Stump were reappointed to the oversight of the Church in Day-

ton district, O., for the following Conference year, with the provision that they shall have full power and authority to exercise their Eldership with discretion.

Art. 18. A petition to seriously consider the propriety of appointing and authorizing brethren for regular Evangelistic work wherever needed throughout the Brotherhood, was referred to a committee of three brethren to formulate a preamble and resolution for consideration of Conference. Report of Com. as follows was adopted: Whereas there is great need among the Brotherhood for Evangelistic work, and whereas Ohio State Council petitions this Conference to outline some definite method for the appointment of proficient evangelistic workers; Resolved therefore, that this Conference appoint a committee of five representative members who shall be called the Lookout Committee, and shall take cognizance of persons qualified for such work, and recommend them to the Examining Com. for appointment upon their approval; and Resolved, that this Conference

recommend the persons so appointed to the hearty sympathy and material support of the brotherhood; and Resolved, that no district shall be obliged to confine itself for evangelistic work to persons so appointed, but whenever feasible are recommended to do so. The Lookout Committee as appointed by the Moderators, are Jacob N. Martin, Samuel Brehm, Eld. B. F. Hoover, H. L. Trump and J. M. Sheets.

Art. 19. A petition to devise some plans and make an effort to publish Sunday School literature under the auspices of the Church was considered, and on motion decided to defer this request indefinitely.

Art. 20. On motion decided that a committee of seven brethren representing the church at large, who shall receive a report from the trustees of the Des Moines Church and Mission property was appointed: Com. Eld. Jon. Wert, Eli M. Engle, Samuel Brehm, D. V. Heise, Saxton Bowers, H. L. Trump and D.S. Wagamon.

Art. 21. A petition from Kansas

Annual Council of 1903, requesting Conference to pronounce itself definitely, as to whether ministers shall be tolerated in teaching the doctrine of a "Second Work" commonly known as the "Total Eradication Doctrine," was considered and on motion decided to refer this petition to the article of Faith as outlined in church government.

Art. 22. The committee appointed under Art. 20, to receive the financial report of the Trustees of the Des Moines Church and Mission properties, reported the total indebtedness to date at \$2604.74; after a short explanation of the Des Moines work, it was on motion decided, by a strong Conference vote, followed by an almost unammons congregational vote that the church assume the indebtedness, and that each member of the church gives assistance in meeting this indebtedness, and that each District throughout the brotherhood take immediate steps to forward to S. R. Smith, Harrisburg, Pa., the sum equal to seventy five cents per mem-

ber for every member of the respective Districts of the brotherhood.

Art. 23. On motion decided that the secretary be officially authorized to see that the proper officials of every District throughout the brotherhood be immediately notified of the decision of Gen. Conference pertaining to the Des Moines Church and Mission property indebtedness.

Art. 24. The Board of Publication of the Ev. Visitor submitted their financial report as follows, which was approved:

Total Amt. of receipts for last Conference year.	\$1466.97
Total Amt. of expenditures for last Conference year,	1317.17
Bal. from year ending May 1, 1903,	149.80
Bal. on hand May 1, 1902,	254.82
Total Bal. on hand May 1, 1903,	\$404.62

In connection with the above report, the Board of Publication recommended the appointment of Bro. Geo. Detwiler as Editor of the Ev. Visitor for the following Conference year, and commented on the improvement in the appearance of the Visitor since the removal; the Board also advised precaution in admitting articles for publication that would

be conflicting with the teachings as generally accepted by the church.

The Board also recommended to furnish the Ev. Visitor at seventy five cents per year to persons who wish to donate it to new parties, and to allow a premium of ten per cent on regular subscriptions to clubs of ten or more.

Art. 25. Conference confirmed the appointment of Bro. Geo. Detwiler, as Editor of the Ev. Visitor.

Art. 26. Conference appointed Elder Jonathan Wert as a member of the Publication Board; his term of appointment to begin from Conference of 1902. Bro. S. E. Brehm, whose term on the Publication Board expired, was reappointed.

Art. 27. A petition from Pennsylvania State Council asking permission to erect an additional building to the Messiah Rescue and Benevolent Home was granted, and the Board of Managers were authorized to proceed with the building as they see proper, with the precaution that they should not drain the Treasury of the Home too close so as to embarrass the finances of the Home.

Art. 28. A report was given by the Philadelphia Mission Building Committee as follows, which was approved:

Total amount of building and remodeling expenses, - - - -	\$2,465.00
Total amount received for building purposes, - - -	<u>2,319.00</u>

Balance debt on Mission building, May 22, 1903, - -	\$146.00
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Following the above report, a glowing account was given by S. G. Engle and others of the good results following their efforts, and what privations the workers sometimes have to undergo in following their mission works in the city slums.

Art. 29. A question was submitted whether members are allowed to join labor unions, which was considered at length and on motion decided to postpone the answer to this question indefinitely, with a proviso that members should be discouraged from joining any labor unions.

Art. 30. The Committee on Church Directory reported that there were a number of copies not yet taken. On motion decided that the Committee be retained for another year and report at next Conference.

MESSIAH RESCUE AND BENEVOLENT HOME.

Art. 31. A financial report of the Messiah Rescue and Benevolent Home of

Harrisburg, Pa., was submitted by A. B. Musser, Treasurer, as follows, which was approved:

Balance in treas. May 1, 1903,	\$776.37	
Received from admissions,	774.00	
Received from sale of land,	720.00	
Contributions and other receipts during Conference year,	- - - -	1,364.87
		<u>\$3,635.24</u>

DISBURSEMENTS:

House expense and other incidentals,	\$1,870.46	
Repairs and improvements,	- - 347.42	2,217.88

Balance in treasury May 1, 1903, \$1,417.36

A financial report of the Messiah Home Orphanage was also submitted by the Treasurer, A. B. Musser, as follows, which was approved:

Bal. indebtedness, May 1, 1902,	\$469.93	
House expense and other incidentals from May 1, 1902, to May 1, 1903,	- - - -	374.51

Total indebtedness and expenses, \$844.47

Received from contributions during last Conference year, 351.85

Bal. indebtedness, May 1, 1903, \$492.62

The Messiah Home Orphanage

Endowment Fund, May 1, 1903, \$1,700.00

Following the above reports, the Secretary gave a description of the general character of the Orphanage work and explained the method and purpose of the Endowment Fund.

FOREIGN MISSION BOARD.

Art. 32. Financial report of George Detweiler, Treasurer of the Foreign Mission Board was presented as follows, and approved:

Bal. in treasury, Conference of 1902,	- - - -	\$274.66
Rec'd during Conference year,		933.41

Total, - - - - \$1,208.07

Paid for support of the Matoppa Mission, South Africa, 565.31

Balance on hand May 21, 1903, \$642.76

Total amount donated to Foreign Mission Fund, - - \$4,937.69

Total amount forwarded for Foreign Mission Work, 4,294.93

MATOPPA MISSION SPECIAL FUND.

Total amount received up to May 11, 1903, - - - - \$2,280.30

Total amount forwarded to date, - - - - 2,261.15

Balance on hand, - - - - \$19.15

Balance on hand May 22, 1902.	\$139.97
Rec'd during Conference year,	538.88
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	\$678.85
Forwarded during Conference year,	659.70
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Balance on hand;	\$19.15

In connection with the financial report of the General Foreign Mission Board, the following was submitted and approved, as follows: The several members of the General Foreign Mission Board reported that contributions for Matoppa Mission, S. A., were in some sections very liberal, while in others less favorable.

REPORT OF FOREIGN MISSION OPERATIVE BOARD.

Art. 33. Sec. 1. The Foreign Mission Operative Board presented the following, which was adopted: Whereas the Matoppa Mission work is progressing under the blessings of God, Resolved, That this Conference expresses her appreciation of the successful and faithful labors in the various departments of the Mission, and hereby recommend the hearty support of the Church at large; and be it further Resolved, That this resolution be inscribed on the minutes of this Conference.

Sec. 2. The Foreign Mission Operative

Board examined Sisters Sallie Kreider, Campbelstown, Pa., Martha Barr, Lancaster, Pa., Magdalene Landis, Silverdale, Pa., and Ada Sider, Stevensville, Ont., as to their fellowship with God and the Church, and their willingness to come under the regulations of the Church, and were found worthy and satisfactory to be accepted as Foreign Mission workers to go forth as soon as the Lord further opens the way.

Sec. 3. The report of the Foreign Mission Operative Board's examination was approved and the Sisters recommended were confirmed as Foreign Mission Workers.

Sec. 4. Conference authorized the Foreign Mission Operative Board to proceed with establishing a Mission in India, to be under the auspices of the church, and supervised by consecrated workers, two at least to be man and wife.

POOR FUND.

Art. 34. Bro. Saxton Bowers, Treasurer of Poor Fund, submitted a report as follows, which was approved:

Bal. in treasury May 17, 1902,	\$256.16
Received from interest and other sources,	10.54
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Total,	\$266.70

Paid for support of Sister Weakly, Des Moines, Iowa,	12.50
Total, May 20, 1903,	\$254.20

GENERAL MISSION FUND.

Art. 35. Bro. Saxton Bowers, Treasurer of General Mission Fund, submitted a report as follows, which was approved:

Bal. in Treas. May 20, 1902,	\$100.08
Received during Conference year,	290.15
Total,	\$390.23
Expenditures during Confer- ence year,	237.82
Bal. in Treas. May 21, 1903,	\$152.41

Art. 36. A verbal report was given by several brethren of the Buffalo Mission wherein was set forth that the Mission was evidently under Divine sanction, since the labors abound in good results, and the work is self sustaining.

CHICAGO MISSION.

Art. 37. A report of the financial condition of the Chicago Mission, from May 15, 1902, to April 15, 1903, was submitted and approved, as follows:

Bal. in Treas. May 15, 1902,	\$33.07
Amount received during 11	

months following May 15, 1902,	450.23
Total Bal. and receipts,	\$483.30
EXPENSES.	
Rent,	\$330.00
Fuel and light,	51.00
Incidentals,	110.75
Total expenses for 11 months following May 15, 1902,	-\$491.85

Balance due Chicago Mission, April 15, 1903,	\$8.55
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Following the above report a written statement was given expressing thankfulness of the workers to those who have contributed to their support, and praises to God for his comfort in whom they trust.

DES MOINES MISSION.

Art. 38. A report was submitted by Bro. J. R. Zook and wife, Sister Anna Zook, of the financial condition of the Des Moines Mission, as follows, which was approved:

EXPENSES.	
Fuel,	\$60.00
Gas, water, car fare, groceries and living expenses,	318.31
Rent for dwelling house since December 1, 1902,	75.00
Total expenses to May 1, 1903,	\$453.31

Rec'd in contributions from	
May 1, 1902, to May 1, 1903,	337.80
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Bal. due Mission, May 1, 1903,	\$115.51
Amt. rec'd since May 1, 1903,	
to date, - - - -	115.51

In connection with the financial report Bro. Max Mahler gave an impressive verbal statement of the character and method of the work at the Mission, and what effective results are sometimes manifested.

Art. 39. Conference reappointed Bro. J. R. and Sister Anna Zook overseers of the Des Moines, Iowa, Mission.

Art. 40. Conference appointed Bro. Max Mahler a worker in Des Moines, Iowa, Mission, pending his acceptance of the Examining Committee.

Art. 41. Conference authorized the Trustees of Des Moines and Altoona, Iowa, Church properties to sell the Altoona, Iowa, church and apply the proceeds according to the conditions as implied in the deed under which the property was conveyed to the Church by Eld. Chas. Good.

Art. 42. A petition from Pennsylvania State Council, asking whether Art. 18, of Conference Minutes of 1902 relative to Chicago Mission, was complied with, was considered, and on motion decided

to refer this question to the Examining Committee to deal with it as outlined in Art. 25, Conference Minutes of 1901.

The Examining Committee reported the above as follows, which was confirmed by Conference: Whereas, we the Examining Committee appointed by this Conference to investigate whether Art. 18, of Conference Minutes of 1902, relative to Chicago Mission, were complied with, have considered the conditions of things in the Chicago Mission, have Resolved, That G. C. Cress, as Pastor of the Mission shall not allow the use of the organ or instrumental music in church services.

Art. 43. Bro. G. C. Cress was reappointed Pastor of Chicago Mission, pending his acceptance of the report of the Examining Committee under Art. 42, relative to Chicago Mission.

Art. 44. Arizona, California and Carland Missions were not reported.

Art. 45. S. R. Smith, of Harrisburg, Pa., was appointed permanent trustee of Des Moines and Altoona, Iowa, Church properties to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Elder Henry Davidson.

Art. 46. The Examining Committee issued certificates for Home Mission work to Sisters Annie Stoner, Mary A. Sider, Lydia Heisey, Annie Bert and

brethren J. H. Myers, Max Mahler, Peter Stover and wife.

Art. 47. The Examining Committee issued certificates for evangelistic work to J. R. and Anna Zook, Noah and Mary Zook, Samuel and Katie Haugh and G. C. Cress.

Art. 48. Whereas it has pleased God in his wisdom to call Eld. Henry Davidson, of Harrisburg, Pa., from the active duties of life and from the ranks of the living on earth, and while we bow in humble submission to the will of our Master, we believe that our loss is his eternal gain.

Resolved, That this Conference hereby expresses her deep and heartfelt sorrow for the loss of him who was so much needed in perpetuating the Master's cause. And be it further Resolved, That this resolution be inscribed on the minutes of this Conference.

Art. 49. Whereas the brethren and sisters of Lancaster County, Pa., have so kindly and bountifully provided for the needs and bodily comforts of members and spectators of this Conference; Resolved, That this Conference hereby presents a heartfelt vote of thanks to the brethren and sisters who have so kindly contributed, in material and labors

towards the support of this Conference, and be it further Resolved, That this resolution be inscribed on the Minutes of this Conference.

General Conference of 1903 was an humble and yet a dignified body of believers; not vain, but Christ like; not selfwilled, but easily entreated without compromising with evil, which is good will to men in all it implies. As in some former Conferences there was a deep seated solicitude apparent on account of some grave matters which confronted those who were appointed to council; but God has again verified His promises Gen. 28: 15, Psalm 37: 25, Heb. 13: 5, that with a few exceptions all could join in voicing their closing sentiment, "PRAISE GOD FROM WHOM ALL BLESSINGS FLOW."

On motion Conference adjourned to meet at Stayner, Ont., on third Wednesday of May, 1904.

MARTIN H. OBERHOLSER,
MODERATOR.

S. R. SMITH. SECRETARY.

EXAMINING COMMITTEE.

Eld. M. H. Oberholtser, Eld. Aaron Martin, Eld. Chas. Baker.

FOREIGN MISSION OPERATIVE BOARD.

Eld. W. O. Baker, Eld. J. N. Engle,
and Geo. Detwiler.

BOARD OF PUBLICATION.

Eld. J. N. Engle, Eld. Jon. Wert, A.
M. Engle, S. E. Brehm, Eld. H. R.
Heise, D. V. Heise, H. L. Trump.

GENERAL FOREIGN MISSION BOARD.

Eld. M. H. Oberholtser, Eld. J. A.
Stump, A. M. Engle, A. H. Engle, J.
M. Sheets, J. R. Zook, P. M. Climen-
haga, Peter Steckly, H. L. Trump,
M. M. Shirk, Samuel Whisler.