

# The Sabbath Recorder

What then? Shall we cease to strive with ourselves? Shall we be silent because men are indifferent and heedless of our message? We must not yield. We must not cease. We must press the battle till the sun goes down, and rest on the field while darkness gives an hour to renew strength, that next day may find each in his place again. Right and truth will not always wait with pinioned arms upon the scaffold. Wrong and falsehood cannot always usurp the throne and the seat of Justice. God standeth ever behind his own, even though they see him not. Our faith must see Him in spite of darkness. Our souls must feel His Presence though disappointment heaps hindrances on every hand. We must not falter. God helping we will not.

—A. H. Lewis, D. D.

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## EDITORIAL

### The Aftermath of Summer.

Who does not love the hazy October days? The softened sunlight, the blue mellowed outlines of distant hills, the many-hued robes of field and forest, the soft warm southern breezes sighing through the pines and rustling the dead leaves of oak and maple and chestnut, the chilling air at sunset—all tell us that the days of summer's aftermath are swiftly passing. How suggestive is every aspect and voice of Nature as these autumn days go by! Each one starts an echo in the soul until memory is flooded with thoughts of other days. For an hour I have been sitting in this chestnut grove crowning the hilltop near beautiful "Hillside," where sleep hundreds who are done with the scenes of earth and have passed on to the land where frosts never come and where blossoms never fade. Who could stay an hour amid such surroundings, with the earth bathed in glorious October sunshine and with just enough of soft autumn winds to stir the leaves and cool the brow, without reading some lesson from the open book of Nature? A tell-tale rustling reveals the movements of every little bird or mouse or squirrel, and all about are sounds of falling leaves as they come sifting down to earth. Now and then a peculiar rattling through the gorgeous clothing of the branches, followed by a suggestive thud upon the carpet of the forest, tells where the brown rich chestnut has fallen. Then comes the voice of some scolding jay, or twittering sparrow, or the distant alarm of

the cawing crow, the saucy chatter of a squirrel, or the rustling sound of a rabbit hopping through the brush, and something in them all tells you that summer is ended and you are surrounded by the aftermath of her harvest. There is something peculiar about the heat of this October sunshine, which reminds you of the scorching glow from some nearly burned-out conflagration. Every scene that meets the eye is shrouded in a glimmer which you never see in summer, and something in every sound would tell you that autumn is here even if you could not see. There is a peculiar ring to the whistle of that farmer's boy yonder, as he walks over the fields, that harmonizes with everything about you. Look across the fields to where those two gunners stand waist deep in weeds sprinkled with golden-rod; watch them as they follow the lead of their dogs, and listen to the peculiar crack of their guns, and you know that October is here. Look a little farther to where that large field is marshalled with even ranks of corn shocks from end to end, with the huskers busy stripping the golden ears; it is a beautiful October scene. It takes one back to days gone by when with two sisters we helped our father husk the corn on the old hillside farm. But listen! do you hear the "talking" wheels of that heavy-laden farm wagon as it makes its way across the field toward yonder barn? Bless me! what floods of memories come at that familiar sound. I see the old corn-cribs, or cellar, or barn, waiting to receive such loads as could be found only in October, and almost wish the Octobers of long ago might return to me.

But this cannot be, and upon second thought I would not have it so. Life's year can have but one springtime, and that is enough; it can have but one summer, and who would want more? Thank God for beautiful, softened, fruit-filled October! It holds all the good of both spring and summer.

Look at these faded leaves at our feet. Do you think they are emblems of blasted

hopes? I am sorry if they bring you no other message. Each leaf has performed well its part in the summer's work and left the results of its life in the sturdy tree it has helped to build. Its day is done, but some tree is stronger and better because the leaf has been true to its mission. It could now do no more if it had remained, and it is just as natural for it to wither and fade as it was for it to bud and unfold. Its October should be as joyous as its May. Indeed, its glories were never so beautifully displayed as during these autumn days when it was preparing to fall.

These reflections bring to our hearts the question: What shall be the aftermath of summer with the thousands of young people now living among us? We need not ask this question in regard to the aged ones. Their aftermath shows for itself; but what shall be that of those who are still in life's summer? Shall it be nothing but blighted or withered leaves—nothing but briars and weeds? or shall it be sturdy growths and sound fiber, with good fruit well matured?

If it be the latter, then shall life's October be lived in a beautiful mellow light amid visions of a home where frosts never come, and with a sunset illumined with celestial glories even unto the end.

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#### A Lesson From the Trees.

As we stroll through the woods on our homeward way, every object seems vocal with its lesson. The gathering shades of evening add solemnity to the scene and make nature's teachings more impressive. The very trees are eloquent with their dignified and serious messages. Here close by the path stands a stately old chestnut that evidently belongs to another generation of trees. For many years it has battled with the storms, improved the days of sunshine and of showers, and brought forth fruit to a good old age. All its companions of early years are gone, and today it stands surrounded by another generation of straight young trees of its own kind. I notice that all these are bearing leaves and fruit in abundance exactly like those of the old tree. This is good. They seem true and loyal to the ancestral tree. None of the chestnuts have turned into basswoods or dogwoods or elders; they are true chest-

nuts still, and are proudly bearing just as good fruit and the same in kind as was ever borne by the parent tree. When the few old trees still standing have passed away, there will yet be left a forest full of trees just like them in every respect. The timber in the new generation is just as straight and strong as any ever found in the old, and wherever it is tested it has the true ring. There is no sign of this forest ever dying out. There is not a renegade among the young trees, but each one is true to the character of its parental tree.

How suggestive! Would that this were always so with men in all our churches. Here and there we see one of the faithful fathers standing in life's October, frosted and being stripped of leaves, but still bearing fruit, faithful and true. Like Paul these faithful ones have fought a good fight and now stand ready to be crowned. Happy is the church where such fathers are surrounded by a host of loyal young men and women, who will be true after the old leaders have fallen. What is the prospect in your church, my young brother? Is there a good band of loyal ones, straight and strong and true, who have the right ring when tested, upon whom the church can depend when the veterans fall? Are you such a one? Look about you and see if all those over whom you have an influence are steadily growing into the work. If not, can you help them any? Would that the prospects for perpetuity were as good in our churches as they are in the chestnut grove.

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#### The Story of the Tombstones.

While walking through a beautiful city of the dead I stopped to study the names upon the marbles. Such an experience is well calculated to make one thoughtful: and if he has the welfare of his people at heart, he cannot help thinking of the work these silent sleepers have left behind, as one by one they have gone down into the valley and the shadow of death. Here lie many of our strongest leaders, who a few years ago nobly bore the heavy burdens God had laid upon the denomination. It almost makes the heart stand still to read name after name of those good men who inspired us so in days gone by, and whose work

was so important that we did not see how we could do without them. But they are gone from earth, and their personal activities for the Master we shall witness no more. But their good work goes on wherever they so placed their money that it should do for them after they were gone. Their endowments of our schools, churches and boards do not die, and much of our ability today is due to their generosity while they were living.

Did it ever occur to you that the greater part of our work as a people is now being done by men whose names have been on tombstones for years? Take away the work of last year done by use of endowments for our schools, churches and boards, and we would have a poor showing left. If we should study the inscriptions in our cemeteries with an eye to discover how much of the work we report each year is really done by dead men, it would put the living to shame! How thankful we should be that God gave us such men, and that we are permitted to build upon the foundations they laid.

But look again with me at the names upon very many of the oldest slabs in this cemetery. You will be appalled to see how many old family names appear which cannot now be found upon any of our church rolls! The same experience will come if you search almost any old burial place near which our people have lived. All over Seventh-day Baptist New England, New Jersey, New York, West Virginia, and scattered all through the great West, you will find on the tombstones family names common to Seventh-day Baptists years ago, but the last vestige of which has long ago disappeared from churches of our faith! This is sadly suggestive. What a host we might now have if all the members of our families had been true! Then we take a second thought and wonder if this old story is to be repeated when the record of this generation is filled out. How many of the boys and girls now in our homes will sleep in graves where the passer-by will have to say, These were once Sabbath-keepers, but forsook the law of God and the faith of their fathers? How many of our own loved ones will prove true and faithful unto the end? Are we doing all we can to make sure of their loyalty?

#### A Hard Problem.

I wish the people of the entire denomination could witness one or two sessions of the Tract Board and see for themselves what problems confront the Board and how hard it is to decide what is best to do. To make the test a good one, I would have the Board remain ignorant of the presence of the people, so as to avoid the tendency to put the best side out when in the presence of a large audience. I would have the people see things just as they are in order better to understand their own duties. It is difficult to put all the facts on paper or to place them before the people in Conference assembled, so as to show the real spirit and inner life of the men who are trying to do our work. Cold formal facts and figures seem to lack spirit and life, and with these alone it seems difficult to arouse much enthusiasm. This is doubly true if the people do not read them with an earnest desire to enter into the spirit of the work. It is no easy thing to carry on a work concerning which the people for whom it is done have no special interest, and for which the gifts from the people are utterly inadequate. I wish the people would wake up and tell the Board what they really do want done, and what measures they are ready and willing to support, and then stand squarely by their agents who are trying to carry out these wishes. It would be so much better if feelings of approval and interest in the work were as prompt to make themselves known as are feelings of disapproval and indifference. True, the clamorings of one or two critics are oftentimes louder and stronger than the expressions of hundreds who are satisfied. The clamorings are sure to make themselves heard. I wish the expressions of approval and interest were as insistent. If this were so, the multitudinous voices of approval would completely drown all discordant voices; and this would put hope and inspiration and new life into the heart of every member of the Board.

One month ago the Board decided that in view of results thus far obtained and in view of the expense, it would be best to discontinue the circulation of the monthly edition outside the denomination. This they did after much hesitancy, and after many efforts to discover what were the wishes of the people upon whom they must depend

for the support of the work. The thought was expressed that possibly more good might be done by a living teacher who should spend his time in the field among the churches and the people where such work is needed. This living teacher should have all the work of the Tract Society at heart, labor to arouse interest in better Sabbath-keeping among our own people, secure a much larger subscription list for the RECORDER, and go with evangelical and Sabbath truth wherever our own churches are surrounded by people who may be interested in the Sabbath question.

The thought had come from various sources that we were neglecting our own churches in the effort to reach outsiders, and that we were losing at home more than we gain abroad. We were told in various ways that we ought to do more for our own people. The extra monthly edition was therefore stopped and a committee appointed to search out and name a suitable man to call to this work. Up to the time of the next Board meeting, the available man had not been found, and the question was raised as to whether our churches would approve of such a field agent, even if one could be found.

The old criticism regarding a multiplicity of field agents came to the front, and for more than an hour the men of the Board bowed down over this matter in earnest discussion, only to be left as much in the dark as they were at the beginning. The thoughts that our pastors would not approve and welcome such an agent to labor in the churches, and that the people already looked askance at all field agents were brought into the discussion, and various objections arose and prevailed. The danger of another debt bore heavily upon their hearts and the men of the Board were really put to their wits' ends to know what to do. The thought of a field agent was dropped for the present. The one great problem over which they studied was, "How can we interest our churches—our own people—in the work?" This is the hardest question to answer. Who shall do it? How shall it be done? These are the things that trouble us. Does anybody care? Why is there not more interest in securing subscribers for the RECORDER? Why do funds

come in so slowly for the Tract Society's work?

Our printing house is handicapped in its work, and has to send away some of the fine jobs because it has not the proper machinery. A new job press is very much needed. Without it the men must work at a loss. There are old RECORDER subscriptions enough, now overdue, to buy two such presses! Thus the work drags on year after year! Friends, what can you do to help the Tract Board solve its problems?

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#### A Thanksgiving Offering.

Some denominations are making a special effort to secure large Thanksgiving day offerings for foreign missions. They set apart the week of November 22-28 for this special ingathering. Such an offering must commend itself to every Christian of whatever name or faith. Why would it not be a good thing for all the churches, Sabbath schools and Endeavor societies to appoint committees and push a Thanksgiving movement to raise the remaining funds needed for that new chapel in Shanghai? Let us take hold of the matter and send in a splendid thank-offering for such a good work. Let the workers in China know that our hearts are with them and that we are anxious to help them build a suitable place of worship, which they so much need. How nice it would be if all the children, and people young and old would unite in a thank-offering of one thousand dollars for this purpose. It would be a blessing at home and abroad.

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#### Read President Clark's Article.

On another page will be found an excellent article upon "The Perpetuity of the Denomination, Conditioned upon the Spiritual Life of the Churches." Every one ought to read it and ponder well the thoughts set forth by President Clark. The saddest feature of our present condition is the lack of spiritual power in the churches, and the surest prophecy of our future downfall is found in the cold, formal worldliness that pervades our church and home life. No wonder we have so few converts; no wonder we are suffering from scarcity of ministers; no wonder our young people are so careless about the Sabbath, and our

churches are so nearly empty on prayer-meeting nights. What we need more than anything else is an old-fashioned pentecostal season, a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit filling men with power from on high. This one thing would soon settle all the vexing questions that trouble us, fill our treasuries with funds for the Lord's work, and give us all the strong men we could use.

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#### An Oversight.

By some oversight on our part the article in last RECORDER, page 502, entitled "Sunday Observance From the Standpoint of Jesus," was published without giving credit to Dr. Lewis, its author. It is an able review of an article on that subject published in the *Homiletic Review*, and if you did not read it last week, better get your RECORDER and read it now.

### CONDENSED NEWS

#### Our Fleet in Japan.

At this writing, October 19, the American fleet lies at anchor in the harbor of Yokohama, Japan. The ships are in good condition, although showing the effects of the battering they received from the waves during the fearful cyclone they encountered en route. This was reported to be the most violent storm the fleet had ever encountered, and in it the Kearsarge became separated from the other ships and did not again find them until the morning of their arrival at Yokohama. The moment the fleet dropped anchor the officers started for the flagship, where a meeting was held with Japanese officials who came to arrange details for the reception in their country. Then our Commander-in-chief and other admirals went in a motor-boat to the Japanese flagship Mikasa to make an official call upon Japan's Vice Admiral. This call was immediately returned by the admirals of Japan, who were most heartily welcomed by Admiral Sperry.

A garden-party was given our officers in the afternoon by the Mayor of Yokohama, and in the evening the city was fairly ablaze with electric illuminations in honor of the visitors. Every token of respect was shown

the American men wherever they appeared in the city. They were saluted by officers, soldiers and police as if they were all kings.

In a conspicuous place in the illuminations, the word welcome flamed out in large letters that could be seen from far away on the sea. It seems that Japan fairly outdid herself in her demonstrations of friendship for the United States of America.

#### The Trouble in the Balkans.

The reports from the Near East for the past week have been anything but favorable for peace. Forebodings of ill were flashed across the ocean one day, to be followed by hopeful messages the next day, and all Europe has stood with bated breath for fear the fire would burst into a general conflagration. Some days it seemed as if Europe was nearer to a great war than she had been for many years; and again people would be cheered by hopeful signs of a peaceful solution of the troublesome problems. While some of the smaller powers have clamored for war, the larger nations have evidently been doing all they could to preserve peace. They seem ready to join in extreme measures, if need be, in order to prevent an explosion. Unfortunately the program outlined by England, Russia and France was very unsatisfactory to Turkey and Austria, and its premature publication brought a tremendous strain upon the bands that held back the "dogs of war." It was the plan of the first three nations mentioned above to recognize the independence of Bulgaria and the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Austria as accomplished facts. But they were too reticent regarding the matter of compensation from Austria to Turkey, and the matter of rectifying frontiers. Turkey entered her protest to this plan, which brought forth an angry outburst of feeling, in which Austria expressed the purpose to stand pat upon her action without any respect to recompense. Turkey was evidently the sufferer, still pleading for enforcement of the Treaty of Berlin. Bulgaria flatly refused to pay any indemnity to Turkey and began to marshal her hosts for war. Just at this critical time Germany advised Austria-Hungary that the Kaiser's government approves the annexation of the two provinces and would support the movement.

We cannot blame Turkey for feeling injured, and just now in the transition period between the constitutional government and the monarchy she seems helpless. The last news before this writing seems more hopeful. Bulgaria at the last moment has come down from her "high horse" and seems inclined to listen to terms from Turkey. She also assures the Powers that she does not want war. These last messages are reassuring. France seems to be acting as a mediator, and we hope another week may see the sky all cleared and the trouble settled.

### DENOMINATIONAL NEWS

#### Fire at Farina

We are very sorry to learn through the Farina papers that the home of Rev. Chas. A. Burdick was destroyed by fire a few days ago. A brave fight was made to save the home but scarcity of water made it impossible. Willing helpers joined in carrying out the household goods, most of which were saved. Brother Burdick and family will have the sympathy of all RECORDER readers. They are now living in Elder Seager's house. We understand that the burned building was only partly insured and that Elder Burdick's loss will be heavy for him to bear.

#### George H. Utter Honored.

We clip from the *Westerly Sun* the following, which will interest many readers:

GEORGE H. UTTER OF WESTERLY ELECTED PRESIDENT.

The Rhode Island State Sunday School Association closed a most successful convention last evening in Providence. The Bible-school teachers from all parts of the state had been attending the sessions since Monday evening, and all agreed that the convention was one of the most successful in the history of the association. Last evening was made noteworthy by a street parade of several hundred members of men's classes, and a subsequent meeting in the Union Congregational Church intended especially for men. That great house of worship was filled with men, and much enthusiasm in the work was shown. The

speakers were C. D. Meigs of Indianapolis and former Governor Utter of this state. At the morning session Mr. Utter had been elected president of the association for the ensuing year.

D. Burdett Coon, pastor of Shiloh Church, has been given a four weeks' vacation and he is supplying the pulpit of the New York Church four Sabbaths in October.

Rev. Henry N. Jordan of New Market Church has begun taking postgraduate work in Union Theological Seminary of New York, spending three days each week in that work.

Rev. George W. Hills of Nortonville, Kansas, has accepted the call to become pastor at Salem, West Virginia, and expects to begin his work there with the beginning of the year.

Rev. Ira Lee Cottrell of Leonardsville, New York, has been spending a pleasant vacation among the scenes of his old pastorate at Ashaway, Rhode Island, and with his son in Plainfield, New Jersey.

#### **The Perpetuity of the Denomination, Conditioned Upon the Spiritual Life of the Churches.**

PRESIDENT C. B. CLARK.

*Read before the Northwestern Association, June, 1908.*

It was a spiritual ideal that created the church. The church was organized to meet the felt want for a spiritual service. The church has been perpetuated and prospered just to the extent that it has adhered to and served the spiritual ideal upon which it was founded. The church, therefore, has a distinctly spiritual mission. It exists to conserve spiritual life and stands primarily to serve the spiritual interests of our nature. So long as our nature remains what it is, so long must some institution answer to this demand for a spiritual experience. History presents no more pathetic picture than the frantic labors of men and women who have tried to keep alive institutions and organizations in which the breath of life had gone out and the enthusiasm dried up.

It is a law of nature that when any organism ceases to fill its function in the economy of the universe in which it was created and for which it was developed, it dies. It is contrary to the nature of the universe that anything should be perpetuated on its own account, but so long only as it renders some service to the larger whole. Whatever cannot serve, or refuses to serve, God through nature, eliminates and exterminates. If a foot or hand is tied up, it withers. Uselessness, that is, failure to function or be of use, simply means death, anywhere and everywhere in the economy of God's universe. This is a divine law and principle. It is as inexorable as the Ten Commandments. It is absolutely futile to attempt to reverse this order. If this be true—and who can doubt it—then it follows as an inexorable divine law that any church which ceases to perform its function as a spiritual power must forfeit its existence. The very moment a spiritual institution loses its power to create spiritual energy in its members, in that instant its very life is endangered. And what is the same thing, the moment we as a church begin to fight for our own existence and self-perpetuation instead of the spiritual life which we profess to serve, we mortgage the future to the devil; and if we persist, we forfeit our right to continue. That moment we are weighed in the balance and found wanting. If we perish, it will be because we deserve to die. If in our churches we foster in each and every member the spirit of a spiritual service, we shall live. If we bear to the world and exhibit in our own lives the Christ ideal of conformity to the divine will of God, then shall we live and prosper.

No one has a right to take it for granted that a formal church attendance and a perfunctory cessation from labor on the Sabbath is equivalent to the spiritual life. We pray "Thy kingdom come," but the kingdom of God will not come until in our concrete lives we practice the evangel of the Christ life and experience. That which easily differentiated Christ from the pseudo-spiritual leaders of his age was the fact that Jesus always penetrated to the spirit which prompted any act or word, while the Rabbis dissipated every spark of spiritual energy in legal casuistry and perfunctory

outward obedience. If we desire to prosper as churches and as a denomination, our every-day lives on the farm, in the shop and in the home must be charged through and through with moral passion, with spiritual enthusiasm and holy purpose. We must refuse to be content with the spiritual experiences of last year, of ten years ago, or with the history of strong spirituality in the early days of the denomination. We should present and live the highest type of concrete spiritual living of any people on the face of the earth. We must refuse to be beguiled into the spiritual formalism of our age but, instead, the spirituality of true Sabbath character must be applied consistently to every walk of life seven days in a week. Unless as Sabbath-keepers our concrete lives exhibit spontaneously a higher standard of spiritual and moral excellence than the conventional life of our age, the world has a perfect right to question the potency of our theories. Not only that, but we ourselves and our children as well will sooner or later be obliged to settle the illogical practice of differing from the world with nothing more than formal reasons for doing so.

The one indispensable requisite to inclusion in the higher order of things which is sooner or later to overtake the religious world is deeper spiritual efficiency. To my mind, one of our greatest needs as a church and denomination is a spiritual consciousness that can apprehend what is the content of the spiritual life as conditioned by and applied to twentieth century life. We cannot separate the spiritual life from the conditions and environment in which our lives are cast. Truth is eternal but its expression is always fitted to the conditions of the hour, and hence our spiritual life cannot be framed on the conditions that existed fifty or one hundred years ago. The spiritual message of the church must in our day meet the demands of a changed and changing industrial, economic and social order, or it will fall upon deaf ears. Any spiritual message which continually talks of righteousness as something apart from daily social justice separate from the concrete life of home and farm and shop and store will sooner or later count for nothing. Any spiritual message which shall endure must cover the whole range of life. It must ap-

peal to the intellectual, emotional, moral and volitional nature. It must be whole-souled, free from cant and moral hypocrisy. It must be as broad as life, as deep as nature and as high as heaven. If we preach less or live less we shall eventually die of spiritual starvation. If in life we have two standards, one for the Sabbath and one for the market-place, we shall be judged by the latter. If, in the world of business, nothing shall distinguish the Christian and Sabbath-keeper from the man of the world who theoretically knows nothing of the spiritual life, neither God nor man will long pay much attention to the labels and tags. The fact that we are Seventh-day Baptists does not in itself do God or man any harm or any good; but so far as this fact shall symbolize the attainment of spiritual excellence, so far will God and the universe decree the worth of our permanence and work for our perpetuity. So long as our profession shall mean concrete righteousness in the flesh of each man and woman, so long shall our name be a rallying post for the forces which make for righteousness. So long as the name of our church shall stand for noble self-forgetfulness in personal devotion to the common weal, so long shall our church stand a monument to the practicability of the spiritual life. So long as in self-forgetfulness our ambitions center in the establishment of the kingdom of God among men, so long may ours be an ark of salvation; and when it has been established, the ark will be no longer needed. So long as our church shall be a vital remedy for greed and selfishness and animalism and inhumanity, so long will her instructions continue. In short, my Christian friends, so long as we accord with the constitutional principles of life by adjusting ourselves to the universe as embodying the divine will of God, so long will the God of the universe sustain us and our work, but no longer.

These things I believe most thoroughly. I hope we may heed this truth, that it is only with the life of God deep in the soul that we as individuals or churches can find life and perpetuity. If we are consecrated to the reality of the spiritual, we need not fear. If we shall despise our spiritual birthright, we shall sell our denominational existence for a mess of pottage.

### An Autumn Walk.

MRS. C. M. LEWIS.

Silver-toned voices are calling, calling,  
From sunlit spaces, from wild byways,  
Come forth to the hills! come walk through the  
valleys,  
Drink in the rich wine of these autumnal days!

Behold the broad fields just left by the reapers,  
Where full sheaves are waiting to be gathered  
in;

Come walk through the orchard with luscious  
fruit laden—  
Red, golden, and russet, and rich shades of  
green.

Rich colors are spread with the full brush of  
nature

O'er forest and field and along the wayside;  
Each bush is aglow with its inherent splendor  
Which deepens in beauty as on the days glide.

The asters lift up their bright starry blossoms,  
The goldenrod waves its rich plumes in the  
breeze,

Low bird-notes are heard from thicket and way-  
side.

But the modest chewink is all that one sees.

How breezily merry the squirrel's gay chatter  
As he stops for a moment the scene to survey.  
Then away on the fence his bushy tail flashes,  
And into the bushes he scurries away.

We leave the charmed valley and climb to a sum-  
mit

Where a broad panorama of far distant hills  
Presents a new page of the grand book of nature,  
Which to the true lover its beauty reveals.

With glistening eyes we gaze on the picture,  
And read God's thoughts sublimely revealed  
In the blue dome of heaven, the far distant  
mountain,

The flash of the river, the forest and field.

We linger in woodland, we wander enchanted  
Where rich colors blend along the highways.  
Ah! who can behold the glories of autumn  
With heart unattuned to worship and praise?

### The Church is not Outgrown.

Until there can be shown some other social institution which can boast an equal record of social reforms—of slavery ended, of life protected, of woman ennobled, of children educated, of homes sanctified, of schools, and missions, and charities, and martyrs—your social reformer had best give himself a course in church history. There he will learn something of the effectiveness that comes to a reform through the sanity bred within the Christian church he affects to regard as outgrown—*Shailer Mathews*.

## Missions

### Our Mission.

Ours the needed truth to speak,  
Right the wronged and raise the weak.  
Ours to make earth's deserts glad,  
In her Eden greenness clad.  
Ours to work as well as pray,  
Clearing thorny wrongs away,  
Plucking up the roots of sin,  
Letting heaven's warm sunshine in.

Watching on the hills of faith,  
List'ning what the Spirit saith,  
Catching gleams of temple spires,  
Hearing notes from angel choirs.  
With the seer of Patmos gazing  
On the glory downward blazing,  
Till upon earth's grateful sod  
Rests the city of our God.

—*Punshon*.

### A Little Chinese Christian.

This pretty little story is told of a spelling class in China: The youngest of the children had by hard study contrived to keep his place so long that he seemed to claim it by right of possession. Growing self-confident, he missed a word, which was immediately spelled by the boy standing next to him. The face of the victor expressed the triumph he felt, yet he made no move toward taking the place, and when urged to do so firmly refused, saying: "No, me not go; me not make Ah Fun heart solly." That little act implied great self-denial, yet it was done so thoughtfully and kindly that spontaneously came the remark: "He do all same as Jesus."—*Selected*.

### Mission Life in China in 1848.

Rev. J. K. Wight, pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Green Cove Springs, Florida, celebrated on Sunday, August 23, the anniversary of his ordination which occurred at Troy, N. Y., August 23, 1848. His subject was "Reminiscences of Sixty Years." He told of the trip to China with his bride in 1848, of their sail around the Cape of Good Hope; of their early life as foreign missionaries; of their short stay at Ningpo, and then at Shanghai. Here in conjunction with Dr. Culbertson he organized the Mission of the Presbyterian

Church. He spoke of his acquaintance with Liang Afar, the first Christian Chinaman. Now, though he still lives, the Christians in China number 170,000. He was at Shanghai at the time of the Tai Ping rebellion and was driven from his home by the rebels.—*Rev. E. Van Dyke Wight, in Southern Presbyterian.*

A few years ago a little Eskimo girl on the western shore of Hudson's Bay, learned of Jesus, and with her father moved to the hunting-grounds in the far north. They settled in a camp of some one hundred and twenty hunters. Here the little girl acted as their Christian teacher, reading the Bible to the Eskimo children in their snow houses, and in other ways helping the people. Later a minister visited the place, and was greatly surprised, at the signal for prayer, to see all these sturdy hunters immediately go down upon their knees. The little girl had passed on the good tidings she had heard, and the word had had its effect.—*Review and Herald.*

It is not the profession of Christianity simply which the unbeliever takes as evidence for Christianity's genuineness, but he expects its professor to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. In Korea visiting Christians from Manchuria approached some Chinese merchants, who were not Christians, on an errand of inquiry.

"Who are you?" they asked.

"Christians from Manchuria."

"Are they the same sort as the Christians here?"

"We do not know," was their reply.

"What are the Christians here like?"

"Good men. Good men."

"Why do you think so?"

"O, a man owed us an account five years ago of twenty dollars. He refused to acknowledge more than ten, and we had no redress. A few months ago he became a Christian, and came and asked us to turn up that old account, and insisted on paying it up with interest all these years."

This was the unmistakable evidence to these merchants of a real change of heart and life on the part of their old customer,—an evidence which requires no argument to prove.—*Review and Herald.*

**Tract Society—Meeting of Board of Directors.**

The Board of Directors of the American Sabbath Tract Society met in regular session in the Seventh-day Baptist Church, Plainfield, N. J., on Sunday, October 11, 1908, at 2 o'clock P. M., President Stephen Babcock in the chair.

Members present: Stephen Babcock, J. A. Hubbard, Corliss F. Randolph, C. C. Chipman, W. M. Stillman, F. J. Hubbard, J. D. Spicer, H. N. Jordan, T. L. Gardner, Edwin Shaw, Asa F. Randolph, N. O. Moore, W. C. Hubbard, J. B. Cottrell, C. W. Spicer, Theo. G. Davis, H. M. Maxson, Mrs. H. M. Maxson, W. H. Crandall, M. L. Clawson, A. L. Titsworth.

Visitors: Vice President Rev. Ira Lee Cottrell of Leonardsville, N. Y., Rev. D. B. Coon of Shiloh, N. J.

Prayer was offered by Rev. D. B. Coon. Minutes of last meeting were read.

The Advisory Committee reported correspondence relating to a representative of this Society on the denominational field.

The Supervisory Committee reported matters as usual at the Publishing House, and presented for advisement the question of endorsing a note with Conference, the proceeds to be applied on bills due for publishing the historical volume, and also submitted the question of purchasing a new job press for the Publishing House. By vote, the proper officers were authorized to endorse the note, the amount being \$700. On motion it was voted that the question of purchasing a new job press be referred to the Supervisory Committee with power.

The Treasurer presented his report for the first quarter, duly audited, which on motion was adopted. He also presented statement of receipts and disbursements since the last meeting. He also presented a legal paper to be executed officially, relating to the bequest of Lois Babcock to this Society. On motion the matter was referred to the Treasurer, and W. M. Stillman.

Correspondence was received from Mrs. Addie Lewis Russell, Corresponding Secretary A. H. Lewis and Dr. S. C. Maxson.

The following report was presented by Corliss F. Randolph:

(See report on another page, "Visit Among German Seventh-day Baptists.")

On motion the report was adopted and bill of expense ordered paid.

Voted that Secretary Lewis be requested to attend the annual meeting of the New York State Sabbath Association to be held in Utica, N. Y., on November 8, 9, 10, should his health permit, or if not, to secure a substitute to represent us at that meeting.

Voted that the Recording Secretary express to Secretary Lewis the sympathy of the Board in his illness, and their most earnest wishes for his speedy recovery.

Minutes read and approved.

Board adjourned.

ARTHUR L. TITSWORTH,  
Rec. Sec.

**Miracles.**

REV. J. W. CROFOOT, M. A.

*A paper read before the "Monday Club" of young missionaries at Mokanshan summer resort, August 17, 1908.*

So far as I know there is little tendency on the part of the Chinese to question the Christian miracles. The discussion of them may therefore be somewhat less practical than those we have had at some other meetings. But since most men are gifted with something of curiosity, which like that of Prometheus prompts men to learn all that may be known of the unseen, and since there is among educated people in Western lands a wide-spread tendency to doubt, or at least to question the reality of the New Testament miracles, a discussion of them such as this paper is designed to open may not be without interest to us.

Let us consider then three questions: What is a miracle? Is a miracle possible? and are the New Testament miracles credible?

1. Hume, the great skeptical philosopher of the eighteenth century, defined a miracle as a transgression of natural law. This is inadequate, to say the least, until the expression "natural law" is itself defined. "The man in the street" is apt to say that a miracle is contrary to science, failing to realize that the science of any time is merely the latest guess about the facts of the universe. Of course I would not decry the service and value of scientific investigation, nor of the conclusions or hypotheses of

science. But I would protest against that presumption which assumes that these hypotheses are the final word about the world and its constitution. It is only necessary to mention such words as alchemy, phlogiston, chemical element, atomic theory, and radio activity, to illustrate what I mean when I say that science is only the latest guess.

Similarly "laws of nature" "are simply a generalized statement of the way in which the objects of nature are observed to act and interact." Thus a miracle may be the action of perfectly natural forces, according to perfectly natural laws, of which we are ignorant; as, for instance, in the early days of electromagnetism, an entertainer on the stage made it impossible for a light box to be lifted from the floor, by what seems now the simple means of applying a powerful electromagnet under the floor, to hold down the steel bottom of the box.

Of course the miracles of the New Testament are in one sense not to be compared to the mere wonders of a "magician," but this illustrates the point that in some of the miracles the apparent disturbance of the order of nature may have been due to a higher physical law known to Christ but not to the observer of the miracle. This suggestion with a wide application of it to the Gospel narratives is made by Archbishop Temple. If this is true of the miracles of Christ, they are miracles of knowledge, if not miracles of power. A miracle, in my view, is no more the violation of a law of nature than the catching of a falling baseball is a violation of the law of gravity. An outside intelligence intervenes to change what would otherwise be the course of nature.

Huxley sees Hume's error in speaking of laws of nature as if the generally observed method were the only method, and he admits that the laws of nature are necessarily based on incomplete knowledge; but he follows Hume in considering a miracle as a naked marvel, a thing considered by itself without reference to its design. Now a miracle is more than a mere marvel. As Canon Moyley says: "The greatest marvel, or interruption in the course of nature, proves nothing. But if it takes place in connection with the word or action of a person, that coincidence proves design in

the marvel and makes it a miracle." The definition of a miracle then must not only state that it is a variation from the observed order, but must also include the element of design or purpose. "The name miracles," according to Professor William Newton Clarke, "has been given to special acts of God, departing from the ordinary method, performed in the sight of men for a moral purpose."

2. Is a miracle possible? This question requires only the briefest consideration. In my opinion, to state that a miracle is impossible is tantamount to claiming omniscience. Whatever may be the attitude of the ignorant, few thinkers will be so bold as to maintain the absolute impossibility of miracles. Only an atheist or a pantheist could do it. In Hume's "Essay on Miracles" the design is not to question the possibility of a miracle, but only to show that it is impossible to prove one.

3. This brings us to the third question: Are the New Testament miracles credible? Hume seems to base his chief argument against miracles on the ground that they are "contrary to experience." Possibly he defines away the meaning of this expression, but the plain meaning, "contrary to experience," reduces to the absurdity that nothing could ever happen for the first time!

To many people it seems, as indicated above in speaking of a miracle as a mere marvel, that miracles are naturally to be doubted because of their marvelousness, without taking into consideration the design or moral justification of miracles. To be sure extraordinary occurrences require more careful verification than ordinary ones, but since miracles are not so much a proof of the existence of God as are the ordinary regular courses of nature, so the true standpoint from which to look at miracles is the theistic. At any rate the possibility of the existence of God must not be excluded in considering them.

Granted then that there may be a free Spirit above all, we have the possibility of design, which to a large extent removes the improbability of miracles. An illustration used by Fisher is: "If we are told that the enlightened rulers of a nation on a certain day deliberately set fire to their capital and consumed its palaces and treasures in the

flames, the narrative would excite surprise if not incredulity. But that incredulity vanishes were it added that that capital was Moscow, when held by an invading army." In short the characteristics of Christianity, considered apart from the alleged miracles connected with it, predispose the mind to give credit to the testimony on which these miracles rest. In other words, it may almost be said that while the church of the first century believed in Christianity because it saw the miracles, the church of the twentieth century believes in the miracles because it sees Christianity.

My first reason for believing in the miracles is that the narrative of them forms an integral part of the account of the origin of the Christian religion, as contained in the Gospels and the Acts. It is not possible now to enter largely on the question of the authenticity of the New Testament accounts of the life of Jesus and his disciples, but we have the Christian religion before us as an existing reality. We also have the account of its origin which has been accepted by the church itself since the last quarter of the first century. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, there is at least a reasonable probability that the New Testament account is the true one.

While Christianity itself is the chief evidence of the miracles, subsidiary evidence of their genuineness is found in several particulars. For instance, the injunctions of Jesus not to report his miraculous cures are meaningless unless the miracles actually took place. Since these injunctions imposing silence are admitted to be authentic, the miracles must have been wrought. So the repeated cautions of Jesus against a too high esteem of miracles are an evidence of the fact that the miracles were real occurrences. The disciples were enjoined to rejoice that their names were written in heaven rather than that demons were subject to them.

Again, much of the teaching of Jesus admitted to be genuine is inseparably connected with his miracles. For instance, his reply to the messengers from John the Baptist, and his controversy with the Pharisees who accused him of being in league with the Prince of demons. Whether demoniacal possession was a literal fact or only a

popular idea, the phenomena were actually cured by Jesus.

The manner in which miracles appear in the evangelical tradition as forming crises in the life of Jesus is an evidence of their reality. It was the signs which he did that filled the people with wonder, that made it necessary for him to retire from public gaze, and that made the people wish to make him king. It was the raising of Lazarus which caused the rulers to determine on his death. The fact that this was such a turning-point leads even Renan to conclude that there was an apparent miracle here. The fact that his disciples believed Jesus in his lifetime to be the Messiah is evidence that he performed signs of his Messiahship in their presence. How else can we account for their continuing to follow him after being taught the erroneousness of the popular view of the Messiah.

We are sometimes told that that was a credulous age, and every one was eager to believe in miracles. While many undoubtedly expected the Messiah, when he came, to be a miracle worker, the incredulity of the religious classes of that day is constantly shown in their attitude towards Jesus and his miracles. The fact that no miracles are attributed to John the Baptist, a preacher nearly equal in popularity to Jesus himself, is evidence seemingly overlooked by those who harp on the credulity of that age, or who advocate a myth theory like that of Strauss.

The resurrection of Jesus is the supreme miracle not only in that it may be said to be the most marvelous of all the signs, wonders and powers related in the New Testament, but in that it establishes Christ's position as victor over sin and death. This supreme miracle is worthy of somewhat fuller consideration; for if this is found to be credible, little or no room is left for questioning the others.

While we cannot go extensively into questions of date and authorship, it may be said that probably the earliest account of the resurrection, or rather of the appearance of the risen Lord, is Paul's account in First Corinthians. Now Paul had studied this subject. Three years after his conversion he had gone up to Jerusalem and spent a fortnight with Peter. The death of Jesus was then a more recent event than the death

of Queen Victoria or of President McKinley is now. He then had first-hand testimony of the events immediately connected with the resurrection, as well as his own experience on the Damascus road, to confirm to him the truth of what he wrote to the Corinthian Christians in about the year 54. He makes in the strongest possible way his statements that "now hath Christ been raised from the dead," and enumerates five appearances besides the one to himself, one of the five being to more than five hundred persons, the greater part of whom were still alive. Is it possible to believe that Paul was deceived in so important a matter?

The Gospel of Mark, probably the earliest of the four, perhaps written between 55 and 60 A. D., even without the later appendix plainly states that "he arose." So do all the other three and the book of the Acts. It was the crux of all the apostles' preaching. Is it credible that, if he did not rise, the story that he did so could have obtained general credence within twenty-five or thirty years of his death? And if he did not rise, what became of his body? The Jews were eager for evidence that he had not risen. The theory that he did not die at all on the cross but was taken down in a state of unconsciousness had many advocates a century ago but has none now.

The "vision theory," practically the only one now held by those who deny the physical resurrection, is surrounded by so many objections as to make it untenable. "Whoever thinks that the disciples were self-deceived, not only, as Schleiermacher correctly judges, attributes to them a mental imbecility which would make their whole testimony respecting Christ untrustworthy, but implies that when Christ chose such witnesses his judgment was strangely at fault." Was Paul and were the other disciples such men as would be apt to be deceived by hallucinations? Nay, is it within the bounds of reasonable belief that the timid Simon, son of John, denier of his Master, could be changed to the Peter who daily braved death for his faith, by a subjective illusion? How is it possible to account for the fact that the group of men who were, on the crucifixion, scattered and utterly hopeless, could in three days all be so deceived by the same hallucination as to completely change their views of Jesus, and

their whole attitude toward life? Moreover how could more than five hundred people, who must have been of various temperaments, have all been deceived at one time by the same dream? Sometimes it is said that the believer in miracles is a credulous person, but I submit that the vision theory is too much for my credulity. Another objection to this theory is that the appearances were so limited in number and time. If five hundred people were so neurotic and hysterical as to all have a vision of Christ, analogy would lead us to suppose that most of them would have the vision many times. Why were the visions so few? and why did they all cease at a given time?

Some four or five years ago, when Dr. George F. Pentecost was in Shanghai, he spoke of this subject in a way that made a vivid impression on my mind. Said he: "I was dining with a doctor who said to me, 'I am in sympathy with Christianity, but I am a physician. I cannot believe in the alleged miracles of the New Testament, such as that a dead man can be raised to life.'" Dr. Pentecost said, "Excuse me, Doctor, but what is that on your fork?" "A piece of beef," replied the physician. "And what are you going to do with it?" "I propose to eat it, if you will let me." "Excuse me," said Dr. Pentecost, "but do you mean to tell me that you propose to take that piece of a dead cow and raise it up part of a living doctor?" "Oh," said the doctor, "living matter can take that which is dead and make it alive." "Oh, it can?" said Dr. Pentecost, and then he added, with striking emphasis on the divine name, Paul's question to Agrippa: "Why should it be judged incredible with you, if God doth raise the dead?"

I think it was in the January number of the *American Journal of Theology*, published by the University of Chicago, that I read an excellent article by Professor William Cleaver Wilkinson on the historicity of the Gospel accounts of the resurrection. I remember very little of it now except the extreme mildness with which he speaks. He says something like this: Supposing that Jesus did not rise, and supposing that the Gospel accounts are mere fabrications, it is inconceivable how the Gospel accounts can have gained credence. When I say in-



conceivable I mean I cannot conceive it. Again he says: If Jesus died and was buried and his body went to corruption like another's the apostles and earliest church must have known it, and the stories now included in the Gospels must have had a beginning. It is a proper rule of evidence to look for a motive. Now it is inconceivable, I mean inconceivable to me, what can have been the motive of the originator of these stories. Why should men invent a story that would bring them not only incredulity and ridicule, but also suffering and death? This seems to me a sufficient answer to the spontaneous myth theory of Strauss.

In fine it is more difficult to account for the Gospel narratives on any other hypothesis than on the view that they are narratives of actual occurrences. Let us look at the whole question scientifically. We find that the greatest power existing in the world now, two thousand years after the ignominious death of the Nazarene, is the religion based on his life and work. Considered scientifically and dispassionately, the most probable hypothesis is that the account which that religion has given of itself since the middle of the first century is the true one. To follow Rehan and impute pious fraud as the chief characteristic of the Founder of the religion of purity and light, or to give credence to the naturalistic theory of Paulus, which made the apostles fools and Christ a Jesuit, is, I say again, too much for my credulity.

#### A Thorough Demonstration.

"My dear, you must not fidget so with your handkerchief when you're in the pulpit," said the minister's wife, as she walked home by his side after the morning service. "Fidget!" exclaimed the gentleman. "Why, I seldom use my handkerchief. What do you mean?"

"I don't mean using it," replied the wife, laughing. "I hope you will do that whenever it is necessary; but I mean pulling it out of one pocket and stuffing it into another, only to take it out and thrust it under the hymn-book. It's a nervous habit, and it's perfectly distracting to watch you."

The clergyman looked kindly incredulous as he said:

"I think you must be mistaken, my dear. I might have changed it about a good deal

this morning; I believe I did; but I'm certain that it isn't a habit. To prove it, I'll leave my handkerchief with you this evening." It was agreed.

At the close of the invocation the minister's hand was seen withdrawing itself stealthily from his coat-tail pocket, and after he had said, "Let us continue our worship by singing three stanzas," there was a long pause while he fumbled in the other coat-tail before he added—"of the three hundred and forty-third hymn."

By keeping his mind on his hands instead of the hymn, he managed to get through with the singing with only one slip; but there were several awkward pauses during the responsive reading, when the minister's wife watched his hands roam from breast pocket to pulpit cushion and back to his coat-tail again.

During the anthem the minister seemed less absent-minded, but his wife was uneasy when it came time for the prayer, and discreetly covered her eyes. Then he grew more and more distracted, and kept the audience waiting with hymn-books in hand while he made another search for the missing bit of linen before giving out the number of the hymn.

Finally it was time for the sermon. "I invite your attention this evening," he began and then stopped. This time his hand was in his breast-pocket. "You will find my text," he began again "in the eighth chapter of Romans."

The little lady in the pew had gained her point, but really it was ceasing to be a joke. He could never get through his sermon at this rate. Hastily she beckoned to an usher and sent him into the pulpit with the minister's handkerchief. He clutched it with ill-concealed relief, and shot a guilty glance at his smiling wife. Then he drew a long breath, and, as one set free, went on with his admirable sermon.—*Morning Star*.

If anywhere there is an answering smile it will be found in the face of the child. The encouragement of that smile should be one of the pleasures of maturer years.

Christ's life is not to be looked upon as a wonderful exception, but as a witness that this eternal life is the inheritance of all mankind.—*W. H. Fremantle*.

## Woman's Work

ETHEL A. HAVEN, Leonardsville, N. Y.

Contributing Editor.

I love the Lord because he hath heard my voice  
and my supplications.

#### An Autumn Color Scheme.

MARIAN WARNER WILDMAN.

Butterfly-haunted, the great purple asters.  
Throng, golden-hearted, the edges of the road;  
Low to the grass the green boughs of the orchard  
Heavily droop with their ruddy-hued load.

Scarlet and orange, the bittersweet berries  
Light the soft gray of the weather-worn rails;  
Rose-pink and crimson Virginia creeper  
Over the bronze of the blackberry trails.

Sapphire the sky; and the branches, wind lifted,  
Show the great clouds that drift snowily by;  
Sad and reluctant—thou first of the falling!—  
Drops the brown leaf that was quickest to die.  
—Selected.

#### Greetings From Ashaway.

The ladies of the sewing society of the First Hopkinton Church wish to send greetings through the Woman's Page to sister societies at the beginning of our work for another year.

We feel that we need the help and strength that comes from communication with other societies. Miss Haven is constantly pleading for something from our pens, and we believe there will be added interest if we just tell one another what we have done and what we plan to do.

Our society says to have a vacation from May until October, but at the last meeting in May one enthusiastic sister moved to have a lawn fete during vacation. This was held on the lawn in front of the parish house with such good results that in a few weeks a band concert was given in the same place, which was also a success.

We were especially fortunate in having Mrs. Almira S. Steele of Chattanooga, Tennessee, with us on the evening of the band concert. An informal reception was given her in the parlors of the parish house and she was listened to with rapt attention

as she told us of her work in the Master's vineyard. Previous to this she had spoken at the young people's meeting in the afternoon. We who listened to her felt that we had indeed been to a feast of good things. These words kept ringing in our ears as we listened to the story of her life: "None of self, but all of Thee."

Let this be our motto as we make our plans for the coming year's work in our societies. We can get along without very much of this world's goods, the world could very easily get along without us, but our souls cannot successfully get along without Christ. So while we stay here let us give whatever we have of time, of means, of love, not to self, but to Christ.

Yours in the work,

MRS. WM. L. BURDICK, Com.  
Ashaway, R. I., Oct. 10, 1908.

The faculty of discovering merit in others is a most real proof of leadership.

It is only the occasional individual who is consumed by his own importance. Most of the human family have modest opinions of their abilities, are apt to class themselves, in all sincerity, among the one-talented. And even those who do think well of themselves only do so at times. They have lapses into humility when the value of their endowments grows wonderfully small in their eyes. The little after-dinner speech, the lines written for the magazine, so good, so admirable last night, bring blushes to the face when recalled under the clear shining of the morning's sun.

Taking it all in all, human nature is modest and apt to distrust itself—best human nature, at least. It is evident, therefore, that the power of discovery, the high art of detecting latent talent and teaching it to believe in itself, is the earmark of the leader and indispensable to true leadership. To discover in common people unthought of abilities, to bring such abilities to light and set them to work, is highest achievement and is possible only to the born leader.

The amount of latent talent in the average church, Sunday school, young people's society, W. C. T. U. circle, etc., is amazing when once proved by actual experiment. It takes a leader to find a leader, to discover in a quiet, unassuming person, watching his surroundings with serious eyes, a leader

who knows instinctively how to reach results that are not being reached by those around him. There are undiscovered workers, leaders, who will live and die ignorant of their powers unless somebody finds and reveals them to themselves and others.

Another mark of a leader is simplicity, humility. Direct in his ways, unassuming in his manner, he does not think much of himself. He hasn't time; he is too much interested in people and problems to waste time on self and its attainments. He likes to have part in what is going on if it is only in cheering on the workers. His interest is patent; concealment isn't native to him. But devotion to a purpose and to those trying to bring it to pass are as natural to him as breathing.

He is, moreover, an optimist; he does not count on failure. He believes in and for the best all the time, not only the best in the way of accomplishment or final outcome of effort, but the best in his colleagues. Leaders have faith in their kind, are slow to think evil, have large hope. By their faith in men and women otherwise unsteady they make them reliable.

But a leader is not only a discoverer, a believer in his kind, humble, optimistic. He is, above all else, self-forgetful. He has no axe to grind, no ambition to gratify. His concern is not whether he shall head the cohort, but whether he shall have a chance to march with the troops; not place, but the success of the enterprise, counts; not what men shall think of him, but what they shall think of his cause; not whether they shall crown him, but whether they shall throne the truth for which he stands, which is dearer to him than all else.—*The Union Signal*.

#### A Visit Among the German Seventh-day Baptists.

CORLISS F. RANDOLPH.

##### *Ephrata.*

A few weeks ago, I had occasion to visit our German Seventh-day Baptist friends in Pennsylvania in search of historical material, and what writers of history call "local color." My first objective point was the celebrated cloister at Ephrata.

Ephrata is situated on a branch of the

Philadelphia and Reading Railroad, or more accurately, on the Reading and Columbia Railroad, not quite half way from Reading to Lancaster, in Lancaster County, some eighty miles, more or less, by rail, from Philadelphia. It may be reached by the Reading Railroad from Philadelphia to Reading, or by the Pennsylvania to Lancaster. From either Reading or Lancaster one may take the Reading and Columbia, or the trolley road.

A letter vouching for my good behavior while there, written some time in advance by Dr. A. H. Lewis, secured for me a hearty welcome. I arrived on Sixth-day evening and was met at the station by the pastor of the Ephrata Church, Rev. Samuel G. Zerfass, who is likewise principal of the public grammar school of the Borough of Ephrata, a village of some 3,000 inhabitants. The school, a most excellent one, by the way, conducted in a well-appointed brick building of attractive appearance, would be a credit to a town of that size in the metropolitan district of New York City.

The regular Sabbath preaching service of the Ephrata Church was set for the evening of my arrival. I accompanied the pastor to the place of meeting, which is in the old *Saal* (pronounced *Sawhl*) within the Cloister grounds. The entrance into the *Saal* is through a low hooded door made in harmony with the plan of the building throughout. On passing through the door, we find ourselves in a room some twenty-seven feet wide by thirty-six feet long, with a low wooden ceiling. The *Saal* is furnished with several long tables for use at the time of their love-feasts, and with several wooden benches or settees. These are provided with backs. Those originally provided had no backs. In one corner of the room is a tall old Dutch clock—an Ephrata product.

The hymns, of which several are sung at each service, constitute an essential part of their worship. They do not sing for entertainment—they sing for worship. Nor, in announcing a hymn, does the minister say: "We will sing the first, second, and last stanzas." They sing them all, even if there are a dozen stanzas.

The service, except on very special occasions, is conducted wholly in the English

tongue. I had hoped to hear them sing the famous old Lutheran hymn *Eine Feste burg ist unser Gott* (A mighty fortress is our God) in the original language, but in this I was disappointed, as too few of the congregation are sufficiently familiar with that language. They sang some three or four German hymns at one service (their hymn-books contain both the German and the English versions), while I was there, but the pastor "lined" them in the old-fashioned way in vogue when hymn-books were few in number. Their hymn-books are innocent of any music; they merely contain the bare words of the hymns, with the old-time "S. M.," "L. M.," and "C. M.," to indicate how they are to be sung.

A few of the old *fraktur-script* charts hang on the walls—the others, that have hung there for so many years, were away undergoing a process of restoration when I was there.

The ceiling of yellow poplar boards darkened with age contains one board bearing unmistakable footprints. Certain old traditions ascribe these to mystical origin, but the plain, matter-of-fact German of today, after remarking that in the earlier days the Solitary Brethren and Sisters went barefoot in summer, says that these footprints were made by some Brother who sought to relieve his sore feet by applying an ointment composed largely of tallow or some other similar substance.

As I sat contemplating my surroundings, I could but think of the midnight service held for two hours (at first it was four) each night in this ancient *Saal* more than one hundred and sixty years ago, as the mystical Solitary Brethren and Sisters waited patiently, but confidently, for the final day of Judgment to be ushered in, as they thought it would begin at midnight.

Here upon this spot where the minister's seat and desk now stand, Conrad Beissel has stood many, many times as he has expounded to his faithful hearers the mystical portions of the Holy Scriptures, interpreted through the medium of his Rosicrucian philosophy. Here also has oftentimes stood the saintly Peter Miller, as he has taught the waiting multitude the lessons of the life of the meek and lowly Nazarene.

These walls have reverberated, too, over and over again, to the exquisite strains of

the unique, unparalleled Ephrata music, whose melody is forever silenced. Yes, and within these walls, too, have mingled the groans and parting whispers of the dying patriots from the bloody battlefield of the Brandywine, with the prayers of the Solitary for their everlasting rest and happiness, as a Brother or a Sister has wiped the dews of death from their foreheads and closed their eyes in everlasting sleep.

As I ponder over the memory of all these sacred things, an irresistible feeling of awe and reverence steals over me, and I feel as I think Moses must have felt as he stood in the presence of the Burning Bush, and heard the voice of the Lord command him to take the shoes from off his feet because he stood on holy ground; and then again it almost seemed as if I might at any moment see the long files of Solitary Brethren and Sisters, with Beissel and Peter Miller and the Eckerlin brothers and Prior-ess Maria at their head, in their long robes of spotless white, enter to engage in their midnight devotions.

The service, nearly two hours long, closed all too soon, and I departed from the *Saal* and went out into the darkness of the silent night with the spell still upon me.

On the following day, Sabbath, the weekly Sabbath school was held. In this connection, it should be remembered that at Ephrata, Ludwig Höcker (Brother Obed) and his daughter Maria (Sister Petronella) established a Sabbath school in 1740, fully forty years before Robert Raikes established his Sunday school in London.<sup>1</sup>

On the present occasion, after appropriate introductory exercises of the usual character, the school was divided into two classes for the purpose of studying the lesson: one for adults, conducted by Mr. William Zerfass, the brother of the pastor, and one for the children, under the care of the deaconess of the church.

As a guide to their study, a Sabbath school quarterly, published for the special

1. One Isaac Craig, of Allegheny, Pennsylvania, in a communication dated July 28, 1886, addressed to the *Presbyterian Banner*, states that two Sunday Schools were organized in this country previous to the time the Sabbath School was organized at Ephrata, and gives references to his authorities as follows:  
In 1674, at Roxbury, Massachusetts. See *Historical Magazine*, Vol. III. p. 219.  
In 1683, at Newtown, Long Island. See *History of Long Island*, Vol. II. p. 140.

use of German Seventh-day Baptists, was used. Its plan was simple—exceedingly simple—providing for a very free use of the Bible itself in the hands of the members of the class, producing a most impressive result, which would be a most wholesome object lesson to that class of people who feel that a Sabbath school lesson cannot be taught successfully without elaborate lesson helps.

The following day—First-day—was given up to an examination of the material and historical features of the Cloister. The original village was contained within an inclosure of some eight or ten acres, except the large buildings which stood on Zion Hill, some distance above the present cluster of buildings. The borders of the village extended down to the banks of the Cocalico Creek, then back over a narrow strip of meadow to the foot of Zion Hill, and up the hillside a few hundred yards, facing the east.

Many of the buildings have yielded to the immutable laws of decay, and have crumbled into dust. There remain, however, the *Saal*, or more properly, the Sister *Saal* (Peniel), the Sister House, Beissel's cabin, and several smaller houses used as homes of the householders of the Community, in a fairly good state of preservation, with the Brother House literally falling into ruins.

A somewhat hasty visit through the *Saal* reveals many things of more than passing interest. There is the old hour-glass which stood on the table beside the minister while he preached, and told off the time of the service, requiring a full hour to run before turning. Here is the linen of spotless white for use at communion and the love-feasts, spun and woven, perhaps a hundred years ago, which after it is carefully washed each time after use, is "ironed" by a curious but simple process with a wooden block (of pine). Near by is the communion service of wooden vessels—among them two exquisitely turned goblets presented to the community, as we understand, by George Washington, as a token of his appreciation of the service rendered the new Federal Government by the Brethren and Sisterhood, in caring for sick and wounded soldiers and in furnishing supplies for the com-

missary department, for none of which would they accept remuneration; and for the service of Peter Miller in conducting the diplomatic correspondence of the Continental Congress with foreign powers, and in translating the Declaration of Independence into seven distinct European languages. The two glass communion goblets, which Fahnestock (pronounced Fawh-nestock) says were presented by the colonial government of Pennsylvania as a token of its appreciation of the service done by the Community in the French and Indian War, have long since disappeared.<sup>1</sup>

Here are to be seen also the quaint old wooden plates and forks used in the earlier days of the Community, and the old china imported from Scotland more than a century ago for use at love-feasts.

The upper stories of the *Saal* have recently undergone some necessary repairs, and rooms have been fitted up for the use of guests at the time of love-feasts.

Through a narrow doorway (twenty inches by sixty inches—all the doorways are narrow—we pass into the Sister House, where we find some of the cell-like bedrooms, or *kammern*, practically unchanged from what they were when first fitted up more than a century and a half ago. There is the low narrow board shelf fixed against the wall which served as a bed for the weary Sister, as after a long day of hard toil she lay down in the clothes she had worn through the duties of the day, for a few hours sleep before she would be awakened and summoned to the midnight vigil and prayer service. She even had no pillow upon which to lay her head, unless it possibly might be a block of wood. She could wake easier without the luxury of a pillow.

In the very small closet of one of the *kammern*, are still to be seen a few of the carefully shaped wooden pegs upon which the occupant hung her scanty wardrobe. The others have fallen sacrifice to the greedy and unscrupulous hand of the curious relic hunter.

Other rooms were used as work and living rooms. To each group of these was assigned a fireplace built into a recess of the

1. Fahnestock's surmise that these goblets were never used for communion purposes is probably correct, as the German Seventh-day Baptists have always adhered religiously to the use of wooden goblets for that purpose. As new societies were formed, they were always supplied with wooden vessels from Ephrata.

corridor, for the purpose of heat and possibly that of cooking also. Close by in the corridor is a cut stone basin or sink for common use of the adjoining group of *kammern*.

Here may be seen several of the baskets made of rye straw and oaken or hickory splits, some of which were used by the baker to put the dough in to "rise;" others, it is said, were made so skillfully that when soaked in water they became water-tight, and served as vessels in which to carry water.

In some of the rooms are to be seen spinning wheels and various other implements for the home manufacture of wool and linen into cloth. A collection of wooden candlesticks in one of the rooms excites more than a passing interest. One may also see a unique basket with a handle, of clay, and said to have been made at the Ephrata pottery. Until I examined it closely, I thought it was made of hammered copper, which had taken on the rich oxidized coloring which that metal takes on with age.

The stairway in the Sister House is so narrow and winding, and was originally left so unprotected, as to be dangerous to a marked degree. The present caretaker has placed some heavy ropes in such a way as to afford some protection.

The old Sisterhood all passed away upwards of half a century ago. When Walter B. Gillette made his first visit to Ephrata to attend a love-feast in 1844, he said there were still five of them living. The last surviving one, Barbara Keiper (Sister Bevely) died March 16, 1852. The Sister House is now occupied by a sister of Mr. Joseph Zerfass.

In this article, but a few of the numerous objects in the interior of these buildings have been mentioned. Though they are not as numerous as they once were, there are still enough to attract a large stream of visitors, the register of visitors as kept in the office of the *Saal* showing that between two and three thousand people visit the Cloister annually.

Now let us spend a short time in looking about the grounds. At the south end of the *Saal* and but a few steps distant from it, stands the little cabin of Conrad Beissel, in which he spent the last years of his life,

and in which, on that memorable Wednesday, the 16th day of July, 1768, after many years of a strong, abiding faith that he would not have to suffer the pangs of mortal dissolution, but like Enoch and Elijah of old, be translated into the spirit world in the twinkling of an eye, he bowed to the unalterable mandate of his Omnipotent Maker and yielded up his spirit in natural death, and left his body to be committed, tenderly and reverently, to the dust from whence it first came, by his faithful, devoted followers.

A short distance to the west, close by an apple tree, literally almost under it, stood the humble cabin of Peter Miller. Here he conducted the diplomatic correspondence in the name of the newly organized Federal Government of America with the crowned heads of Europe. Here, too, he translated his immortal Magna Charta into the tongues of the French, Spanish, German and other European nations.

Down yonder in the meadow toward the Cocalico, stands the old Brother House—literally ready to fall into ruins—which has not had a Solitary Brother as a tenant for seventy years or more. In 1844, Gillette said that none had lived in it for many years previous to that time; and that its interior had been altered, and that several families occupied it then as a tenement.

At the east end of the Brother House was the upper end of the old Brother *Saal*, which extended exactly ninety-nine feet (a measurement determined by the laborious application of the laws of Rosicrucian philosophy) down the hill toward the Cocalico Creek. This large building, sixty feet in width and three stories in height, much larger than the Brother House, was erected from the material left over after the erection of the Brother House, for the building of which it had been provided and brought together. The lower story was used as a *Saal* proper, and was provided with spacious galleries. The second story was the place where was conducted the famous Ephrata Classical Academy, the details of whose history are still well-nigh shrouded in mystery. In the third story, was situated the Ephrata Press at the time the Great Martyr Book was printed—half of the edition of which, along with several wagon-

loads of other books, was carried away to the battlefields of the American Revolution to make cartridges of for the use of the American Army. Gillette says that in 1844 the old Brother *Saal* was still in existence, but that it was in ruins.

Only a short distance from the west end of the Brother House is the spring—or rather a group of springs—beside which Beissel built his cabin when he first came into the snake-infested wilderness on the Cocalico.

Just across the stream from Beissel's cabin stood the cabin erected for Anna and Maria Eicher, the first Solitary Sisters of the Community, the latter of whom became the prioress, or female superintendent, of the Community, and whom Beissel visited in the morning of the last day of his mortal life and fruitlessly attempted to effect a reconciliation with her, from whom he had been estranged for many years because of the Eckerlin episode.

A little distance to the southwest from the site of Beissel's original cabin, were situated the tannery and pottery; and still on beyond, where the hill rises in an abrupt bluff from the Cocalico, tradition says was a cave—now buried several feet below the surface—where Beissel was wont to retire for contemplation and prayer.

Scattered along the stream on the edge of the meadow, stood the various mills belonging to the Community—the flouring mill, the saw mill, the fulling mill, the paper mill, and the oil mill. Sachse says the paper mill stood on the site of the old mill still standing there, which now contains a plant for generating power for a private electric light plant. A little distance up in the meadow from the banks of the stream, just below the site of the present mill, stood the printing house at one time.

Of all this many-sided manufacturing plant, which Sachse deliberately and confidently declares would have developed into the greatest industrial corporation of the world, but for the disagreement between Beissel and the Eckerlins, only a flouring mill remains, a silent, but eloquent ghost of former greatness. The mills and the communal activity which they represented are all as silent as the tombs in the ancient burying ground, lying in deathly silence be-

side the turnpike which skirts the north side of the cloister grounds.

The Ephrata Academy, which Gillette says was new in 1844, stands beyond the graveyard toward the west, and is now rented for the use of the public school. The building is surmounted by a tower clock, made by Dr. Christopher Witt, of Germantown, Pennsylvania, in 1735.

Up on the hill—Zion Hill—on the west side of the farm which is the property of the Cloister, was erected the large building called "Zion," for the use of the Zionitic Brotherhood. This was one of the principal buildings used as a hospital for sick and wounded American soldiers in the Revolutionary War, and was destroyed, subsequently, because of the virulence of the typhus fever which raged within its walls.

Not far from where "Zion" stood, were buried the soldiers who fell victims of the fatal typhus; and a few years ago, the State of Pennsylvania erected a suitable monument to the memory of these heroes, and in acknowledgment of the faithful service rendered them by the Brethren and Sisters who nursed them.

The time passed all too swiftly, and I had to hasten away to Snow Hill and Morrison's Cove, or Salemville, of which I will write subsequently.

The little church at Ephrata of some twenty-five or thirty members has passed through a long period of untoward circumstances and discouragement, from which it has emerged with courageous, hopeful hearts, and unflinching faith. They are anxious for a closer relation with Seventh-day Baptists of English-speaking descent.

It seems to me that the next time the General Conference meets within the borders of the Eastern Association, it would be a most excellent plan to arrange to have the Convocation meet at Ephrata. The friends there would welcome it with open arms, and entertain and care for it in a most cordial and generous way. It would strengthen and encourage the Ephrata Church immeasurably, and the members of the Convocation would be brought into direct, close personal contact with one of the most interesting chapters of Seventh-day Baptist history which this country affords, and Ephrata could not help but be a source of inspiration to them all.

#### A Tract Upon the Resurrection of Christ.

A twenty-three page tract in which is given a "harmony" of the Gospels upon the "death, burial, resurrection and ascension" of Christ, written by Silas F. Randolph of Farina, Illinois, has just come to hand. The author explains the origin of this booklet and tells about its purpose in the following letter:

DEAR BROTHER AND EDITOR:

About twenty-one years ago and for several years following, there were many able articles published by our people and others, on the time of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. From that time to this I have carefully studied all articles upon this subject, and as a result have written this tract. It has been mailed to the pastors and leading men in our churches, and to several others who have been interested in the matter. As I read the arguments by scholarly men on both sides, my mind was swayed first toward one side and then toward the other, until finally the thought of making a scrap-book composed entirely of Scripture texts came to my help. I bought cheap copies of the Testament and, by clipping the passages given by all four evangelists and arranging them in chronological order in my book, I could see easily how straight was the story they told. At first I felt a timidity lest I should be wrestling the Scriptures, but seeing that noted theologians did the same in their studies, I felt right about it so long as I was careful to keep the true meaning. For many months I faithfully used my spare moments in this study, and was surprised myself to see what a straight story the Bible tells regarding the matter. The Bible does not contradict itself in these chapters. Thus the tract was written.

During twelve or fifteen years the view of the Fourth-day crucifixion, and the resurrection on the Sabbath gained many advocates. Duty took me to California, where I had to live as a lone Sabbath-keeper for about six years. During this lonely life I had leisure for Bible study and Sabbath Reform work. Here I met three or four prominent Baptist ministers who had accepted the unpopular views on this question and were already advocating them. Upon showing them my then imperfect

tract, one of these ministers said, "Not one in a hundred has the question as straight as you have." Another Bible student said that if I ever did get it published he wanted it. Years passed and I became an invalid but could use my hands and eyes sparingly. During the next year or so the entire four Gospels were cut up and arranged as a simple consolidation of the story, of which the Scripture texts in the body of the tract is the last part. The work sent out is very imperfect as to editing, as will be seen in my blunders in proofreading.

I wish to add that the number of visits to the tomb has no particular bearing on the main subject. They simply illustrate the truthfulness of the account. I will be pleased to have the views of those who are interested or who desire to add a mite to the cause of truth. If these views are given to me personally I will try to reply, although I must do so with a trembling hand. I am reminded by my faltering step that "my days are gliding swiftly by." Although I live only a few rods away from the church, I cannot hear the sound of the bell calling us to worship.

Sincerely yours,

S. F. RANDOLPH.

*Farina, Illinois.*

#### Letters to the Smiths:

*To John and Mary Smith.*

MY DEAR NEPHEW AND NIECE:

I have just been reading the RECORDER, and when I got over to that part of it which is so full of human interest to us, I found that you two were happily married and ready to settle down to housekeeping—to establish one more Seventh-day Baptist home. I must tell you that I am glad of it! I do not know that a Seventh-day Baptist home is certain to be better than some others, yet I do feel that people who are loyal to God's truth and are willing to make some sacrifice for the sake of it, ought, from the very nature of the case, to establish and maintain the very best of homes. Wise parents who are truly loyal to "Our Father who art in heaven," are quite apt to have children truly loyal to them; and wise Christian parents and truly loyal children constitute the elements of a happy home.

I wish you, John and Mary, as happy a life as any two lovers ever began together—a long life of many blessings, few sorrows, good health, enough of this world's goods to keep you hopeful, optimistic and thankful; yet not enough to bring you to sudden destruction under the wreck of a speed-mad automobile.

And now, having wished good things for you, I am sure you will allow me to make two suggestions to you as the founders of a new home. I would not do such a thing did I not know for certain—more than forty years after your aunt and I began keeping house—that these suggestions are good ones. My first suggestion has come to me, John and Mary, in connection with our late Sabbath-school lessons. When king David and his men were bringing the ark of God up to Jerusalem, and Uzzah came to his unfortunate death by unwisely laying his hand upon it, David, as you remember, was annoyed, or afraid, and put the ark into the house of Obed-edom and left it there three months. In the meantime, there was war between Israel and the Philistines, and that war, like every war, was followed by a train of all sorts of evils; and I suspect that there was scarcely a home in all Israel that did not suffer from one or more of these evils. But we are told that while the ark of God abode in the home of Obed-edom the Lord blessed him and all his household. It was told the king that, "The Lord hath blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the ark of God." And then David was very anxious to bring up the ark into the city that all Jerusalem might thus be blessed.

Now, I take it, John and Mary, that this ark was to those people the visible token of God's presence, and that while it remained in Obed-edom's house, it was as if God himself dwelt in his home to bless him and his family. We in these days do not have an ark just like that in Obed-edom's house to indicate the presence of God to bless us. But we may, every family of us, have an invisible—a spiritual—token of the presence of that same God, in the family altar. When you give this matter a bit of prayerful thought, I am sure you will agree with me that nothing else can so surely indicate the presence of God in a home as a family altar

around which there is true Christian family worship. Have you not, my dear young friends, been made from homes you have known, to feel that this is so?

And now, John and Mary, you may have all the way along this very token of good in your home; and I verily believe that just so sure as the home of Obed-edom had peace during those three months when the ark of God was in his house, your home will have peace so long as you maintain there a family altar with loving daily worship. You may already have set up such an altar; if so, there is already peace in your home, and may it abide there until you two are called to the better home above. If you have not begun family worship in some form, let me exhort you to do so without delay. It will be a little embarrassing, perhaps, to begin, as it often is to do other good things; yet, if you desire the peace of Obed-edom, you may well open your door to the ark and get the blessing.

I do not mean to assure you that no sorrow, no trouble, will come where there is a family altar; yet I am sure that true worship at any family altar will bring spiritual peace, and give grace to bear the sorrows that sooner or later must come to every home. John and Mary, think about this.

My second suggestion is that you decide that your home shall have, so long as you have a home, that blessed spiritual visitor and guide and help, the SABBATH RECORDER. If you want a truly Christian home you should have—after the Bible—the RECORDER. I did not think so much of this weekly visitor in my younger days. I do not recollect that I read it very much when I was a boy. Yet I am now glad to remember that my father saw to it that it was one of the most familiar papers we children ever knew anything about. Though we were poor folks, he would have the RECORDER and the New York Tribune. The Tribune made soldiers of us older boys, and the RECORDER has held eight of the nine children of us to the Sabbath. Though we did not read it as much as we ought, it yet had an unconscious influence over us for good. Now—oh, I cannot tell you how much it is to me. Now I know that I ought in my younger days to have cultivated the habit of reading it. And

I know, too, that it will do both of you good to do that same thing—if, indeed, you have not already become habitual readers of our most excellent denominational paper.

Soon after your aunt and I began house-keeping and my father urged me to subscribe for the RECORDER, I remember yet with regret one excuse I made for not doing it. I said that it cost too much, that I could get our country paper for half the price of the RECORDER, and I'd take that instead. I did not know then, as I do now, that the *Argus* was getting fat on county printing, even at a dollar a year, while the RECORDER, because so few of us took it, could not at two dollars pay running expenses. And so for a time I contented myself with the *Argus* alone, reading how that John Smith had sold a cow to Dan Jones; that Pete Johnson of Pine River did business at the county seat yesterday; that fishing was unusually good, and that Fred Berray had caught three pickerel from the millpond. I was content, I say, to put up with ten minutes of such reading as this and go without the mental and spiritual food the RECORDER would bring to me. I can see the difference now, and so I urge you, my dear John and Mary, to begin at once with the RECORDER for your family reading, and never to let your home be without it.

If you cultivate the RECORDER habit, you will easily become eager to read Dr. Gardner's bright, interesting, inspiring editorials; glad to profit by Dr. Lewis' vigorous, instructive articles about the history and spiritual value of the Sabbath; find yourself in a receptive attitude toward the many excellent educational and religious articles published from week to week, the most of them written by our own people. You will find yourself as much interested in Home News as if the letters there were really from some of our folks; and you will be drawn to read all about the marriages and deaths, and feel a good degree of thankfulness when you find that those who have lately passed away were ready, after years of faithful service, to enter into rest. And then this RECORDER habit will not only be a spiritual blessing to you and those whom God may give you, but a help to the spir-

itual and material well-being of our denomination. I can wish you nothing better than that you will take heed to both these suggestions. May God bless you, is the prayer of your

UNCLE OLIVER.

#### The House of Obed-edom.

"And the ark of the Lord continued in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months; and the Lord blessed Obed-edom, and all his household." 2 Sam. 6:11.

The house of Obed-edom,  
Where safe the ark abode,  
What time were wars and fightings  
On every mountain road,  
What time was pitched the battle  
In every valley fair,  
The house of Obed-edom  
Had peace beyond compare.

With famine on the border  
And fury in the camp,  
With the starving children huddled  
In the black tent's shivering damp,  
With the mothers' crying sadly  
And every moan a prayer,—  
In the house of Obed-edom  
Was neither want nor care.

The fields of Obed-edom,  
No foeman trod them down;  
The towers of Obed-edom  
Were like a fortified town;  
And only grace and gladness  
Came speeding on the road  
To the house of Obed-edom,  
Wherein the ark abode.

And far and near they told it,  
The men who passed that way,  
How fell Jehovah's blessing  
On that home night and day;  
How the smallest to the greatest  
Had joy and hope and love  
While the roof of Obed-edom  
Was watched by God above.

The time of Obed-edom  
Is on the earth today;  
In the house of Obed-edom  
Still he may safely stay  
Whose dearer than all treasure  
For which men toil and plod,  
Shall prize the covenant-blessing,  
The hallowed ark of God.

And never strife nor clamor  
Shall break the tranquil spell  
In which our Lord's beloved  
Forever safely dwell.  
In the house of Obed-edom,  
In sunlight or in dark,  
Abides the ceaseless blessing  
That rests within the ark.

—Margaret E. Sangster, in the *Pilgrim Teacher*.

## HOME NEWS

MADISON, WIS.—A letter from Brother H. W. Rood contains the following bit of home news: "We Seventh-day Baptists here in Madison have got our Sabbath school started for this year. We have four families settled here, with now and then a visitor. We have what are to us profitable sessions, and they are pleasant too." In speaking of the three student families now in Madison, Mr. Rood says that the Sabbath school gives them something pleasant to associate with the Sabbath, and binds them all together socially and religiously. "It also gives Sabbath-keeping visitors who may be here a place in which to worship. We are soon to send five dollars to the Sabbath School Board."

Let everybody notice the change in their place of meetings, from 933 Jenifer Street to 216 South Mills Street.

**Theological Seminaries too Easy.**

The cry of our churches these days is: "Give us practical men. We don't want theology so much as something to help us to better living." What is the meaning of the cry? That the great truths of Christianity have lost their hold—the truths for which our fathers bled? Not at all. It means nothing else than a demand for a new presentation of them. Men are not turning from religion. They are not less thoughtful than were their fathers. The old gospel has not lost its power. The cry is for prophets—men to interpret God to them in the language and modes of thought of the age in which they live.

Never before was there a cry for better men in the ministry than are demanded today. Never were the opportunities of the pulpit greater. The day has passed when men in any calling are honored simply on account of their calling. The "cloth" counts little these days, but little also does it mean merely to have the title of lawyer or physician. In our new democracy it is the man that can do things that is honored, be he minister, lawyer, physician or anything else. The demand in every calling is for better men.

Now how is this demand being met? The medical school and the law school are raising their standard. It is not so easy to enter medicine or law as it used to be. Throughout our land hundreds of candidates for these professions are rejected every year and must turn their attention to something else. Because of this are men rejecting these callings? By no means. They are rather being attracted to them. It is the hard places that the best men are after, and ever will be after.

It is only the ministry that lacks men. Why? Because the impression has got abroad that anybody can get through a theological seminary. Who ever heard of any great number being turned away from the ministry because they did not come up to the standard? The theological seminary, unlike the other schools mentioned, in order to get students is lowering its standard. Some of the smaller seminaries affiliate with colleges and give their students a diploma after a six years' course—four in arts and two in theology. Even some of the leading seminaries of our land are making the course easier. In some, Hebrew—the difficult subject for so many—is thrown out. We shall soon probably hear that New Testament Greek is no longer required. To the old-time minister it seems strange, to say the least, to think of a man presuming to interpret the Bible who cannot read it in the original languages.

But what the theological seminaries are failing to do, the universities are taking up. In most colleges and universities Hebrew now has a chair of its own. Thus the student who has the ministry in view is enabled to read the Old as well as the New Testament at sight before he enters upon his theological training. So long as the seminary gives only a three years' course, the church, it seems to me, should insist on her future ministers having, before entering it, this previous training.

I was much interested during the past winter—on being present at one of the elementary Hebrew classes at Columbia University and on conversing with a number of the students—at the great strides the universities have made in the method of teaching this difficult subject as well as so many others. Hebrew, I am told, on account of the new method of teaching it, is regarded

no longer as a difficult subject. And indeed I was really amazed at the progress which the class had made, and the ease with which they read and wrote Hebrew after a few months of training of but two hours a week. When such results can be brought about in our well-equipped universities, is it too much to demand that our future exponents of the word of God should be able to read it in the original languages instead of a translation?

The way to attract more men into the ministry is not, I am convinced, by lowering the standard, but rather by raising it.—*An Old-Time Minister, in the Interior.*

**The Story of One Life.**

In one of his sermons at Winona Bible Conference, Dr. Gunsaulus told a story of the life of a wealthy Chicago manufacturer, now deceased, which affected his audience well-nigh to tears. It is impossible to reproduce—particularly in this limited space—the effect of Dr. Gunsaulus' pathetic telling of this biography, but the outstanding facts of the story are these, in brief:

When a boy in Vermont, the subject of the story was tormented by the jeers of his schoolmates, who taunted him with questions about when his father would be home from jail. He had no recollection of his father, and when he asked his mother what these jeers meant, she had no answer for him save her weeping.

But at length the father came home, and the growing boy entered into the bitterness of the grown man's soul, as the ex-convict sought through the community in vain for employment. From his own little bed-room the lad had heard his father and mother praying out of the anguish of poverty for God to send work by which the husband could earn a living for his loved ones. And slipping from his bed to his knees, the boy vowed before God that if his father was given work now, he would devote his life to seeing that other men from prison got a chance to earn a living.

In his young manhood the boy came to Chicago. He prospered and grew very rich. But as his wealth increased, his religious faith seemed to slip from him, and he was greatly troubled by his doubts of the doctrines of the church. Especially was the atonement a puzzle to him, and for

years he made it a point to attend conferences and religious assemblages where the atonement was to be discussed by eminent theologians.

At length Dr. Gunsaulus, counseling him as his pastor, said to the man: "Is there not some particular in which you have made less sacrifice for your fellow-men than you should have done? You will never have a faith in the atonement that is vital until you have yourself imitated in some way the sacrifice of Christ."

Then of a sudden there rolled back over the rich man's heart the memory of the vow of his boyish days, unkept till then. At midnight he arose, and went to the house of his pastor: "I'll do it. I'll begin in the morning."

Next morning he wrote to the warden of a great penitentiary, asking to have a released convict sent to him. The man came and met the clasp of the hand of honest brotherhood. The manufacturer sent him far into the West to nail up advertising signs, and gave him good wages.

Then he got another man from another penitentiary, and sent him out in the same way. One after another he set on their feet such ex-prisoners as he could find, until there were seventeen of them who walked through his private office to a clean, true life. And he told no one of them of any of the others.

But they ran across one another as they traveled, and when they told each other how they had been lifted up out of their common pit of perdition by the same loving hand, they couldn't help forming a brotherhood. They wrote circle letters which went the rounds among themselves, and the rich manufacturer in Chicago was one of the circle.

Then an awful, ravenous disease laid hold on the philanthropist, and month after month led him nearer the jaws of death. But he had no more doubts about the atonement to confuse him. He trusted One who had done for him more than he had done for his fellow-men. And he died in the calmest of trust—a triumph of spiritual peace.

Dr. Gunsaulus said he was rushing to catch the suburban train to go out to the dead man's home for the funeral, when a touch on his arm stopped him. "May I go

out to the funeral with you—the wife and the boy and I?”

The man who spoke was tall and rugged, dressed in the rough garb of a ranchman. “Who are you?” said the minister.

“Oh, I was from Jackson, Michigan. I live in South Dakota now. I came for the boys—came to be at the funeral. This is my wife. This is my boy, named after him. Six of us have got boys with his name now.”

“Of course he went to the funeral,” said Dr. Gunsaulus. “And he went to the grave. After the coffin was lowered the big man in the coarse leather clothes brought seventeen white carnations, and dropped them into the grave—seventeen white flowers for seventeen white souls! And the wife and boy came and dropped in flowers too; that was for their home and all the other homes which this man had made possible.”—*Pittsburg Christian Advocate*.

## MARRIAGES

**FOLSOM-WEBB**—In Adams Centre, N. Y., September 20, 1908, by Rev. E. H. Socwell, Mr. Charles S. Folsom of Finn, N. Y., and Mrs. Julia Webb of Adams Centre.

**LAWTON-STILLMAN**—At the home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Horace Stillman, Albion, Wisconsin, September 24, 1908, by Rev. T. J. Van Horn, Mr. Giles F. Lawton and Miss Alice C. Stillman.

**TYLER-OSBORNE**—At the home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lynford Osborne, in Albion, Wisconsin, September 30, 1908, by Rev. T. J. Van Horn, Mr. Lewis J. Tyler of Edgerton, and Miss Nellie M. Osborne.

**WILLIAMS-DAVIS**—In Adams Centre, N. Y., October 10, 1908, by Rev. E. H. Socwell, Mr. J. C. Williams of Chicago, Ill., and Miss Viola A. Davis of Adams Centre.

**AYARS-DAYTON**—At the home of the groom's parents, Jared W. and Elizabeth Ayars, in Shiloh, N. J., October 12, 1908, by Rev. D. Burdett Coon, Sherman Edwin Ayars, of Shiloh, N. J., and Martha Elizabeth Dayton, of Springfield, Mo.

**PERKINS-YORK**—In Andover, N. Y., October 15, 1908, by Rev. L. C. Randolph, D. D., Frank D. Perkins of Alfred, and Mabel Janet York of Wellsville.

## DEATHS

**GREEN**—Benjamin Green was born in Alfred township, October 9, 1818, and died of pneumonia, October 1, 1908, lacking eight days of being ninety years of age.

Of the ten children born to Benjamin and Lydia Garner Green, only one now survives. Mr. Green was married March 24, 1842, to Miss Louisa Monroe. Of their five children two are living. Of eight grandchildren seven are living and also all but one of the great-grandchildren.

Mr. Green was married the second time, in the year 1892, to Miss Melvina Black. He experienced religion when a young man, was baptized and joined the old Alfred church, afterward transferring his membership to Second Alfred, where it remained till his death. He had read the Bible through eleven times, and was a strong believer in the Word.

Services at the old homestead, Sabbath, P. M., October 3. Pastor Randolph's text, Zech. 14:7.

**STEPHENSON**—J. C. Stephenson was born at Saint Charles, Ark., July 16, 1889, and died October 9, 1908.

He married, September 16, 1906. He and his wife lived together one year and two months, and she died. At the time of his wife's death he, smitten with the same disease—consumption, came to see that he must soon follow. About four months before his death he gave his heart to Christ and kept the Sabbath. He waited for an opportunity for baptism, which came the 13th of September, when he was baptized by Elder G. H. F. Randolph and united with Little Prairie Seventh-day Baptist Church. He bore his illness very patiently. So long as his strength permitted, the brethren met with him every Wednesday night and held prayer meeting.

The funeral services were conducted by the moderator, Andrew Jackson, of Little Prairie Seventh-day Baptist Church, who read the 5th chapter of Revelation.

Mr. Stephenson leaves father, mother, three sisters and three brothers to mourn their loss.  
M. J.

**SAUNDERS**—Entered into rest, Monday, Oct. 12, 1908, in New York City, Lucy Titsworth, widow of Truman Wilcox Saunders.

Mrs. Saunders was born in Plainfield, N. J., Oct. 17, 1847, and was the daughter of Edward B. and Ann Dunn Titsworth. In early life she pledged her loyalty to the Saviour and united with the S. D. B. Church of Plainfield, during the pastorate of Rev. James Bailey. She was a student at Alfred University for a short time and afterward became a very successful teacher. She was married to Truman Wilcox Saunders, July 6, 1876, and removed to Milwaukee, where they made their home until his sad death in 1882. She then removed to Williamstown, Mass., where she united with the Congregational Church. The last years of her life were spent with her

son, Dr. Laurance Saunders, in New York City, from whose home she was called to the Home above. The funeral services were held at their residence, 34 West 55th St., and were conducted by the Rev. Willis H. Butler, of Northampton, Mass., a former pastor. The interment was beside her husband in Milton, Wis., where a brief service was conducted by the Rev. L. A. Platts, D. D., assisted by Rev. W. C. Daland and Rev. Judson Titsworth.

Mrs. Saunders was a rare soul, combining great strength of character with a cheerfulness and sweetness of disposition which made her life a most beneficial influence.

She had the rare faculty of entering into the lives of young people, with many of whom she was brought into close relationship during the greater part of her life, and many have caught sweet inspiration and helpfulness from their contact with her.

Hers was a life of high and noble purpose, marked by strong courage, sweet charity and obedient faith in God and humanity.

Her son, Dr. Saunders, and one brother, David E. Titsworth of Plainfield, survive her.

**SPURGEON**—At Conings, West Virginia, Rosa May Spurgeon, daughter of J. C. and Nettie Spurgeon. Born July 4, 1894; died October 15, 1908, aged 14 years, 3 months and 11 days.

She was converted at a revival meeting, in March, 1906, and was baptized by Elder W. L. Greene in July. She was received into the membership of the Ritchie Seventh-day Baptist Church, of which she was a staunch and beloved member to the end. She was a lovely girl, and the stricken family have the sympathy of a large circle of friends.  
L. D. S.

### An Inquiry.

We have no data at hand regarding the question in the following letter. Perhaps some of our readers may be able to answer Mr. Chester.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SABBATH RECORDER:

DEAR SIR:—I have been referred to you by Mr. John Hix Chester of North Stonington, Conn., as one able to inform me whether your paper's predecessor (*Sentinel*?) published an obituary notice of his grandfather, Christopher Chester, who died at Hopkinton, R. I., January 6, 1831, and was the husband of Martha Chase of West-erly, R. I.

Any information that you can give me will be gratefully appreciated by

Yours very respectfully,

FRANK D. CHESTER.

The sooner we realize that we are immortal the sooner will life assume its rightful proportions and our energies their proper significance.

### Happiness in the Slums.

The age in which we live will perhaps go down into history as the philanthropic or charitable age, for there was surely never a time when so much thought and time and money was expended for the betterment of those in need. There were never so many free hospitals, dispensaries, playgrounds, kindergartens, schools, libraries, settlements and missions holding out help for almost every phase of human need. At the same time there was never an age when it was easier for the individual to lose the finer element of all charity—the personal sympathy which goes out toward another fellow-being. Precisely because our charities are so well organized, because our paid workers are so efficient, it is difficult for the individual to keep in touch with the world's suffering and want and to relieve it through personal effort. It is difficult, but it is not impossible; for there are still ways of personal service and happy are they who find them. Mrs. Alice Freeman Palmer always found them. It was not enough for her to remember, in the hot July days, that there were floating hospitals and “fresh air” camps and recreation piers and mothers' rests, to which no doubt she had generously contributed. She must go herself; and go she did, leaving her quiet and comparatively cool retreat to spend a day each week in the hot city talking to girls in one of the vacation schools. Mrs. Palmer had a genius for friendship and could share her best—her wisdom, her sympathy, her joyousness—with all sorts and conditions of men. How she shared her best with a roomful of girls is evident from an account which Mrs. Palmer herself wrote of one interesting incident:

“One July morning I took an early train. It was a day that gave promise of being very, very hot, even in the country, and what in the city! When I reached my destination I found a great many girls in the room, but more babies than girls, it seemed. Each girl was holding one, and there were a few to spare. ‘Now,’ I said, ‘what shall I talk to you about this morning, girls?’ ‘Talk about life,’ said one girl. Imagine! ‘I am afraid that is too big a subject for such a short time,’ I said. Then up spoke a small, pale-faced, heavy-eyed child, with a great fat baby on her knee, ‘Tell us how to be

happy.' The tears rushed to my eyes, and a lump came in my throat. Happy in such surroundings as those in which, no doubt, she lived; perhaps dirty and foul-smelling! Happy, with burdens too heavy to be borne! All this flashed through my mind while the rest took up the word and echoed, 'Yes, tell us how to be happy.'

"'Well,' I said, 'I will give you my three rules for being happy; but mind, you must all promise to keep them for a week and not skip a single day, for they won't work if you skip one single day.' So they all faithfully and solemnly promised that they wouldn't skip a single day.

"'The first rule is that you will commit something to memory every day, something good. It needn't be much, three or four words will do, just a pretty bit of a poem, or a Bible verse. Do you understand?' I was so afraid they wouldn't, but one little girl with flashing black eyes jumped from the corner of the room and cried, 'I know; you want us to learn something we'd be glad to remember if we went blind.' 'That's it, exactly!' I said. 'Something you would like to remember if you went blind.' And they all promised that they would, and not skip a single day.

"'The second rule is: Look for something pretty every day; and don't skip a day, or it won't work. A leaf, a flower, a cloud—you can all find something. Isn't there a park somewhere near here that you can all walk to?' (Yes, there was one.) 'And stop long enough before the pretty thing that you have spied to say "Isn't it beautiful?" Drink in every detail and see the loveliness all through. Can you do it?' They promised, to a girl.

"'My third rule is—now, mind, don't skip a day—Do something for somebody, every day.' 'Oh, that's easy!' they said, though I thought it would be the hardest thing of all. Just think, that is what those children said, 'Oh, that's easy!' Didn't they have to tend babies and run errands every day, and wasn't that doing something for somebody?' 'Yes,' I answered them, 'it was.'

"'At the end of the week, the day being hotter than the last, if possible, I was wending my way along a very narrow street, when suddenly I was literally grabbed by the arm and a little voice said: 'I done it!'

'Did what?' I exclaimed, looking down, and seeing at my side a tiny girl with the proverbial fat baby asleep in her arms. Now I will admit that it was awfully stupid of me not to know, but my thoughts were far away, and I actually did not know what she was talking about. 'What you told us to, and I never skipped a day, neither,' replied the child in a rather hurt tone. 'Oh,' I said, 'now I know what you mean. Put down the baby, and let's talk about it.' So down on the sidewalk she deposited the sleeping infant. 'Well,' she said, 'I never skipped a day, but it was awful hard. It was all right when I could go to the park, but one day it rained, and rained and the baby had a cold, and I just couldn't go out, and I thought sure I was goin' to skip, and I was standin' at the window, 'most cryin', and I saw—' here her little face brightened up with a radiant smile—'I saw a sparrow takin' a bath in the gutter that goes round the top of the house and he had on a black necktie and he was handsome.' It was the first time I had heard an English sparrow called handsome, but I tell you it wasn't laughable a bit—no, not a bit.

"'And then, there was another day,' she went on, 'and I thought I should have to skip it, sure. There wasn't another thing to look at in the house. The baby was sick and I couldn't go out, and I was feelin' terrible, when—' here she caught me by both hands, and the most radiant smile came to her face—'I saw the baby's hair!' 'Saw the baby's hair!' I echoed. 'Yes, a little bit of sun came in the window, and I saw his hair, an' I'll never be lonesome any more.' And catching up the baby from the sidewalk she said, 'See!' and I, too, saw the baby's hair. 'Isn't it beau-ti-ful?' she asked. 'Yes, it is beautiful,' I answered. You have heard of artists raving over Titian hair. Well, as the sun played on this baby's hair, there were the browns, the reds, the golds, which make up the Titian hair. Yes, it was truly beautiful. 'Now, shall we go on?' I said, taking the heavy baby from her.

"'The room was literally packed this time; ten times as many girls, and as many babies as your mind will conceive of. I wish you could have listened with me to the experiences of those little ones. Laughter and tears were so commingled that I don't know which had the mastery.'—*The Standard*.

## Sabbath School

CONDUCTED BY SABBATH-SCHOOL BOARD.

Edited by

REV. WILLIAM C. WHITFORD, D. D., Professor of  
Biblical Languages and Literature in  
Alfred University.

Nov. 14. The Lord our Shepherd. . . . . Psalm 23.  
Nov. 21. Solomon Anointed King. 1 Kings 1: 1—2: 12.  
Nov. 28. World's Temperance Lesson. . . . . Isa. 28: 1-13.  
Dec. 5. Solomon Chooses Wisdom. . . . . 1 Kings 3: 4-15.  
Dec. 12. Solomon Dedicates the Temple. . . . . 1 Kings 8.  
Dec. 19. Solomon's Downfall. . . . . 1 Kings 11: 4-13.  
Dec. 26. Review.

### DAVID GRIEVES FOR ABSALOM.

2 Sam. 18.

*Golden Text*.—"A foolish son is a grief to his father."

### DAILY READINGS.

First-day, 2 Sam. 16: 1-14.

Second-day, 2 Sam. 16: 15—17: 14.

Third-day, 2 Sam. 17: 15-29.

Fourth-day, 2 Sam. 18: 1-23.

Fifth-day, 2 Sam. 18: 24-33.

Sixth-day, 2 Sam. 19: 1-23.

Sabbath-day, 2 Sam. 19: 24-43.

### INTRODUCTION.

Even when David was obliged to flee from his capitol in view of the overwhelming forces of the usurper, he still had friends. The rebellion had certainly been very cleverly planned, but Absalom did not have the genius to manage men, and to choose with discrimination the course of action best fitted to further his plans.

Not least among the friends of David in devotion and efficiency was Hushai the Archite. We may not in this age of moral enlightenment commend his methods without reserve, but he certainly did well by his master. He made the prudent course of action for Absalom seem unwise, and so completely established folly in the counsels of the usurper that the wise Ahithophel despairing committed suicide long before the outcome of Absalom's reign was apparent to that misguided youth.

Ahithophel had proposed that David should be followed in his flight by a strong body of Absalom's soldiers and that the overthrow of the former king be made complete at once. He even offered to lead this force in person. But by his crafty council Hushai was able to defeat this plan, and David had time to escape to the eastern side of the Jordan and to gather together at his leisure a strong army of those

who were loyal to him. This army may have been less numerous than that of Absalom, but many of the men were seasoned warriors and the generals had had experience and were skilled fighters. The result therefore of the contest with the army of Absalom is not altogether a surprise to the reader.

TIME—A few days or weeks after our Lesson of last week.

PLACE—Mahanzaim and vicinity.

PERSONS—King David; his general, Joab; the two messengers; and others.

### OUTLINE:

1. Absalom is Defeated and Slain. v. 1-15.
2. Joab Sends Messengers to David. v. 16-23.
3. David Receives the Message of his Son's Overthrow. v. 24-33.

### NOTES.

2. *And David sent forth the people.* He made a very judicious arrangement of his forces. *I will surely go forth with you myself also.* He proposed to take for himself the same risks as his soldiers. Although this arrangement was not carried out the soldiers could feel that he was not sending them where he would not willingly go himself.

5. *Deal gently for my sake with the young man.* David could not forget that this rebel was a dear son of his. The king is constrained to resist the usurper in his possession of the kingdom, but does not wish him severely punished. Vain hope!

9. *And Absalom chanced to meet the servants of David.* The battle was lost, and Absalom was now trying to make his escape. The soldiers of David were scattered in pursuit of the fugitives, and a small party of David's body guard came upon Absalom who in his wild flight from those who were near at hand was caught in a tree.

11. *And I would have given thee ten picces of silver, etc.* We must believe that Joab was sincere. He means that he would certainly reward the soldier who distinguished himself in the performance of duty. Joab as we see from what follows had no idea of heeding the king's suggestion of clemency towards Absalom.

12. *I would not put forth my hand against the king's son.* This man looks at the matter from a different point of view, and is extremely cautious. He even implies that Joab would himself be severe with any one who should injure Absalom.

14. *I may not tarry thus with thee.* Joab cannot punish the man for his failure to kill Ab-



salom, and thinks it is not worth while to argue further about the matter. It is not too late to deal with the usurper in an appropriate way. Some have thought that this verse is a later insertion in the narrative, as it was hardly necessary to kill Absalom twice.

18. *Reared up for himself the pillar.* When he set this monument he little thought that a heap of stones over his dishonored body on the eastern side of the Jordan should help to preserve his name in the memory of men. *I have no son.* Compare ch. 14:27.

20. *Thou shalt not be the bearer of tidings this day.* Joab's purpose in refusing this request is evidently to spare the young man from the odium that might come to him from the fact of bearing tidings that were not in all respects pleasant to the king.

21. *The Cushite* was very likely a negro, and possibly a slave. At all events he was one for whose future prospects Joab felt that he did not need to concern himself.

22. *Let me also run after the Cushite.* The motive of Ahimaaz is not apparent. Very likely he was so impressed with the significance of the result of that day's conflict that he could not bear to stand idle.

24. *Now David was sitting between the two gates.* By this we are probably to understand that he was in the space between the outer and inner gateways of the city. *The roof of the gate.* The flat roof over the outer gate. Possibly this roof extended from the outer to the inner wall. *And beheld a man running alone.* The watchman from his position could see the messenger coming long before those who were on the ground. His eyes were also trained for that work.

25. *If he be alone, there is tidings in his mouth.* If this man were a fugitive from a defeated army it would be hardly possible that no other fugitives would be in sight.

26. *Another man running.* The second man seen by the watchman was so far behind the first that each could be said to be running alone. That the Cushite was so far behind Ahimaaz may be explained upon the supposition that the first runner met a number of hindrances in his course, and that the second ran steadily by the longer and smoother way. Or not unlikely Ahimaaz was by far the better runner any way. *And the watchman called unto the porter.* Or much better, called toward the gate. There was no need of any one to repeat the cry of the watchman to David. *He also bringeth tidings.* The king is confident that they are both

messengers and not fugitives from the battle.

27. *I think that the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz.* The translation is altogether too weak. He said, I see, or I perceive. He was not at all in doubt. The watchman from his long experience was able to recognize his acquaintances at a great distance from slight peculiarities in their movements. Compare the recognition of Jehu by his driving in 2 Kings 9:20. *He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings.* David rightly judges that Joab would not be likely to choose so worthy a man as Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok the priest to be the bearer of bad news. However we need not infer that the character of a man is always to be taken as an indication of the character of his tidings.

28. *All is well.* Literally, Peace. This word should not be understood as conveying any information. It is simply the usual word of salutation, and tells no more about the battle than as if the messenger had said, Good afternoon. *And he bowed down himself.* The messenger prostrates himself in reverence in the presence of the king before he delivers his message. The rendering of King James' Version, "fell down," is a little ambiguous, as some one might imagine that the messenger fell down exhausted after his long run. *Hath delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king.* Thus Ahimaaz states clearly that the king's forces have been victorious, and hints at the death of Absalom.

29. *Is it well with the young man Absalom?* To the fond father Absalom is still a youth. He is ready to excuse all the shortcomings of the wayward boy. He inquires for him before he asks about his own officers or whether there were many or few of his own people slain. *When Joab sent the king's servant, etc.* Ahimaaz means to say that he knew none of the particulars of the battle. The only plausible conclusion is that this statement was false. Very likely Ahimaaz felt that since Joab had given him no message to carry, he had to lie.

30. *Turn aside, and stand here.* Since the messenger can give no news about Absalom the king will not take time to interrogate him about other matters when another messenger is approaching.

31. *Jehovah hath avenged thee this day, etc.* A definite declaration of victory for the army loyal to David.

32. *The enemies \* \* \* be as that young man is.* David is not content with hearing about victory but reiterates his question about Absalom.

The Cushite answers as carefully as he can veiling the terrible news in a wish for continued blessings upon the king; but his message is certainly definite.

33. *And the king was much moved.* He was overcome by the terrible news. Doubtless he had hoped for victory, and had expected that the young man would be taken prisoner, and that then a reconciliation might be effected. *O my son Absalom.* The expressive cry of the broken-hearted father. *Would I had died for thee.* The word "God" is not in the original, and should not be inserted. In his great grief David would gladly give his own life for that of his wayward son.

#### SUGGESTIONS.

We may well sympathize with David in the death of his son; but we can not fail to see that his grief was selfish and in part ill-timed. His son was really lost to him not when Joab thrust the dart through his body as he hung in the oak, but certainly when that son lifted his hand in open rebellion, and probably some time before. Parents should remember that it is the early training of the child that counts most; and they should begin to ask, Is the young man safe? long before he reaches the age of twenty-one.

As the people of Jerusalem saw the young man Absalom gracing their streets with his chariots and horses and his numerous retinue, they little thought that his death should be a matter of national rejoicing. He chose the evil way, and came to a miserable end. Many young men today, although probably not quite so disloyal to their parents, are choosing evil ways, dangerous companions, and bad habits. They are bringing disgrace and sorrow to devoted parents, and had better take warning from Absalom.

David was wrong in placing his scapegrace son first in his thoughts before the thousands of loyal men of Israel who had risked their lives in the service of their king; yet we can but admire his forgiving spirit. His son had wronged him over and over again, yet he was willing to forgive. Our heavenly Father is longing to forgive us no matter how grievously we have sinned. We need, however, to turn to him in repentance, seeking this forgiveness.

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The Seventh-day Baptists in Madison, Wis., meet regularly Sabbath afternoons at 3 o'clock. A cordial invitation is extended to all strangers in the city. For place of meeting, inquire of the superintendent, H. W. Rood, at 216 South Mills Street.

Seventh-day Baptists in Los Angeles meet in Sabbath school work every Sabbath at 2 p. m. in Blanchard Hall, Broadway, between Second and Third streets. Room on ground floor of the Hill Street entrance. Sabbath-keepers who may be in Los Angeles are invited to meet with them.

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