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of
CHARLES H. SAGE



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AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

REV. CHARLES H. SAGE

A member of the East Michigan Conference,
Free Methodist Church.

Embracing an account of his pioneer work in Michigan,
of the formation of the Canada Conference and
of his labors in various states.

With an Introduction by
GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT BURTON R. JONES

EDITED BY
WILLIAM B. OLMSTEAD

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PREFACE.

MY ONLY object in writing this book is to glorify God and advance his cause. I have no desire to make a display of what I have done, but I do desire to show what God is able to do with very common people, if they are only saved and will walk in the light as God is in the light. While God has often called great men to do his bidding, he has also called a David with his sling and smooth stones to kill Goliath; a Joseph to save his people from starvation; a Gideon with pitcher and lamp to redeem Israel. Joshua took Jericho without a battering-ram. The walls fell down flat. It was God and not man who gave the victory.

In my weakness and ignorance I have felt many times that I was a failure. Then when I would read how God fed thousands with what a lad could carry in a basket, and how he restored the sight of a blind man by anointing his eyes with a little dust wet with spittle, I have taken courage and have felt truly that God was able to take the weak and foolish things to confound the mighty.

I trust that this simple story of my life will be the means of encouraging honest souls to do all they can for Christ even though they may not be as well prepared for service as they might desire. I send it forth in the name of the Master. Please look on what God has wrought, and not on my mistakes and common language.

Yours in Jesus' name,

C. H. SAGE.

Ovid, Michigan, January 1, 1903.

INTRODUCTION.

TO LIVE a life of devotion to God is an inestimable privilege. Such a life is connected with infinite results which are partly developed in time, but more especially in eternity; the magnitude of which cannot be comprehended by mortal man.

In preparing this introductory note I experience a sense of pleasure at being permitted to contribute a token of respect to one whom I have so long and favorably known, one whose courage, faith, patience and self-sacrifice have done so much for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom.

This volume is a narrative of the Lord's dealings with one who was fully consecrated to his service. The story is told by Mr. Sage in the utmost candor and simplicity and is designed to magnify the mercy and love of God who rescued him from sin and prepared him for his life work. The experience herein related will serve to illustrate how the Lord can use one of his own selection, although a "ruddy son of toil," without scholastic preparation, to defend his truth and promote his work. The church of Christ is God's workmanship, God's building; and the Divine handiwork may be seen, more or less conspicuously, in all the human agencies employed in its upbuilding. All who have achieved success in the work of the Lord, whether gone to their reward or still on the field of action, must be regarded as God-made men.

To glorify God and save his fellow men was ever the motive that inspired the labors of C. H. Sage. He has been loyal to his convictions even at the sacrifice of friends and public favor. He has ever kept disentangled from those temporizing, half-way expedients which always result from noncompliance

with the radical, uncompromising demands of the Bible. He has fully demonstrated that one may have the moral heroism to protest against organized secrecy, denounce the liquor traffic and every form of legislation approving thereof, expose the pride and aristocracy of worldly churches and oppose every form of digression from the principles of a pure Christianity, and at the same time maintain the Christ-like spirit. With a heart filled with love for God and love for souls he has gone before the people with his message of mercy, and many who have been saved and sanctified through his ministry will rise up in the great day and call him blessed. Because of his indomitable courage and perseverance amid abounding obstacles, fierce opposition and bitter persecution he has achieved a measure of success which has won the appreciation of the church.

Brother Sage is now in the decline of life. While he has proven that preaching and laboring in the Spirit is healthful work, yet his labors cannot in the nature of things much longer continue. But his reward is in his works that follow him. His many friends will doubtless take pleasure in reading and circulating this story of his life, thereby enabling him to realize his hope to render continued service to the Master.

BURTON R. JONES.

CHAPTER I.

I SHALL try to write a short history or sketch of my life as best I can from memory. I shall fail to give dates as I have kept no diary. I was born in the town of Wheatland, Genesee county, New York, December 14, 1825. My father was a weaver and worked in the Caledonia mills. He used liquor too freely and got into trouble, and left home when I was three years old, and was gone three years. My mother then moved to the town of Ogden, Monroe county, to live with her brother-in-law. She was born in St. Lawrence county, and had first moved to Ogden when she was only twelve years of age. At that time there were but three buildings in the city of Rochester. My father came back at the end of three years, but was very unsteady, spending his earnings as he went. My mother had to support the family, mostly by weaving.

Naturally I was skeptical when very young. I could not understand the miracles of the Bible; I called them "fish stories." There were two boys of us then and one girl. I was only eight years old. The girl died when she was eighteen months old. My mother took it very hard. She would cry and sigh almost day and night. How I pitied her.

About that time a Methodist camp-meeting was held a few miles from our house, and mother went and was converted. When she came home I saw the change; she read the Bible and prayed and asked a blessing at the table. As she went to her work she sang all day long; Jesus was her joy and her song. I watched her and said, "Something has happened to mother." She took us to church the next Sabbath, and stayed to class, and told her experience. The preacher walked the floor and sang,

"O, tell me no more of this world's vain store,
The time for such trifles with me now is o'er;
A country I've found where true joys abound,
To dwell, I'm determined, on that happy ground."

This took all my skepticism away. I said, "There is something in religion, and I am going to have it." O! for more old time conversions; it will do more to convince infidels than all the arguments and sermons that can be produced. When I was between nine and ten years old my father left home for the West, and has never been heard of since. When I was ten years of age I went forward for prayers, but did not obtain an experience. I tried to live religion, but soon failed. About this time my youngest brother was born, and then there were three boys to care for. We lived in a small house twelve by sixteen feet with a low chamber. We slept up-stairs and had the loom, quill wheel and swifts and all the cooking utensils and furniture in the lower room. We cooked by a fireplace and baked in a bakekettle. After awhile we got a tin oven to set before the fire.

I remember our first stove; it had three griddle holes and the kettles were away up above the fire. I don't remember where the oven was. There came a time when everything was very expensive. I remember that my mother got a team and drove to Adams Basin, on the Erie canal, and paid sixteen dollars for a barrel of flour. She had to pay from ten to fifteen cents per pound for pork. She labored very hard and thought she could not work without a good slice of pork. During the weaving season she would work until after midnight, and then just lay down on the bed with her clothing on and sleep a few hours; and then she would be up and at it again. I would take care of the baby and wind yarn and do the house work, mostly, except making the bread. We knew but little about hygiene. Our ceilings were low and our rooms poorly ventilated, and yet my mother lived over ninety years, and her boys are all alive. I am now past seventy-seven. When the weaving season was over mother would go out and wash and clean house and help the farmers when they killed hogs, and they would give her a lot of pig's heads and feet and spare-ribs, and mother would make headcheese, and fry doughnuts, and we thought we were living on the fat of the land. She used the strictest economy.

I had some time to attend school during the winter season, but went out to work by the day as soon as I could drive a steady team to drag, or ride a horse to plough corn, and when I got a little older I used to hoe corn. I would hoe a hill and skip a hill,

and thus keep up with the men, and then I would go back on the same row in the same way. I only received twelve and a half cents per day. When I first began to work out, I worked for one man twenty-three days; he owed me twenty-three shillings. I felt quite rich.

We used to go to general trainings when the militia drilled, for recreation, and once in awhile to the city of Rochester, ten miles distant. Once when I went mother gave me some money and told me if I saw anything sold cheap, that I needed, or that she needed, to buy it. That was when I was fourteen years old. I got a patent pail for mother, and a sheepskin for a leather apron for myself, and a piece of ginger-bread for my dinner; and took the rest of the money home to mother.

I was under conviction all the time after my mother was converted. When I was twelve years of age I went to another protracted meeting, and again sought the Lord, but with no better results than the first time. I did not backslide for I had nothing to backslide from. When I was between thirteen and fourteen years of age my mother bound me out for four years to learn the blacksmith trade. I was to have forty dollars for the first two years, fifty dollars for the third year, and sixty dollars for the fourth year, and two months' schooling each year. I had to saw wood for the house, milk and feed the cow, take care of the horse, and work two or three hours in the evenings in the shop, and all day Saturday. I went through Adams' arithmetic and learned to read,

write and spell some, but what I learned in the two months was nearly all forgotten during the ten months I was out of school. This, with two or three months' schooling after I was nineteen years old, comprised my little stock of book knowledge.

CHAPTER II.

WHEN I was fourteen years old one of my schoolmates was taken sick. I visited him the fifth day; he was not able to hold up his head, or to take a glass of water in his hand and drink. The next day he died. I went as a pall-bearer. This took a deep hold of me. When we were at school he could handle two like me, and I thought if George Wells died in six days it will not take long for disease to take me out of the world. There was a protracted meeting going on at Spencer's Basin, now called Spencerport, and I went on foot and all alone. The snow had been deep, but was thawing then and it was very wet and hard walking. I reached the meeting with a heavy heart. I can not tell what the preacher said, but before I went I had decided to get religion, and all along the road the devil had been holding a controversy with me. He said all the boys and girls at school will make fun of you. You will have to go alone. But I decided I would go if I went alone. Then he said there is no religion for you; you have tried it twice before, and there is no use of your trying again. But all the time during the sermon I kept saying I will go forward if I die trying. But when the time came it did

not seem to me that I could get on my feet, and when I finally did stand up, it seemed as though I was so tall that every person in the house would see me; but I found my way to the altar which was only a bench without a back. Several there went forward at the same time, and the saints gathered around us, and all began to pray at once. O, what a noise! That was before the Methodists had learned good manners, but it proved a great help to me. I was very bashful, and could not have been hired to pray aloud, but as there was so much noise, I knew they could not hear me, and so I thought this is my time, and I just cried and prayed with all my might. I told the Lord I would be true if he would only forgive my sins. They had not learned then to buzz around a penitent's ears, and undertake to get those who are seeking to profess religion before they are really converted to God. There was no picking the shell off of the chicken's head; they just let them work themselves out. Praise God for old-time altar services! Every saint held on to God. They cried, "My God, the work must be done now," and I replied, "Yes, it must be done now;" but all at once my tears began to flow, and I no longer had any desire to pray. I felt bad because I could not feel worse. I did not know what to do. I was not happy, yet I could not feel distressed. The season of prayer closed, and the leader wanted us to testify, but I did not have anything to say. The meeting closed and I went out into the road, and as I turned to go towards home, I began to sing,

“ O how happy are they
Who their Savior obey,”

and the glory came. I continued to sing and was very happy all the way, and it did not seem more than fifteen minutes before I reached home. I knelt beside the old barn and prayed, and the words came so easy that it seemed to pray itself. The Spirit indicted my petitions. What a sweet peace I had! What a sweet sleep I had that night in the arms of Jesus! The first time I went home I told mother I had got religion. She said, “I hope you will stick to it this time, you have failed twice before and I don’t want you to fail again.” I said, “Mother, I did not have religion before, but now I have something to help me live right.” Two weeks from that time one of the old neighbors asked the wife of my boss if she thought Charlie had religion. Her reply was that she knew I had because I was so changed. Said she, “Before this when I scolded him he would get mad and pout around for two or three days, but since he went to Spencerport I have not seen anything of it.” Now when she scolded me I would blush a little and go away and pray.

I made up my mind I was going to be a whole-hearted Christian. The first time I prayed in public was in a prayer-meeting in the old school house. I went there trembling; I took my seat between two brethren, and I felt like a little chicken sheltered under its mother’s wing. It is a good thing for young converts to get into the amen corner, if there is one. One of the old brethren prayed, and I struck

in without form or ceremony. I prayed only two or three short sentences, and could not wind up my prayer. One of the old brethren patted me on the back and said amen for me, and then added, "That is good enough, and God will hear and answer that prayer just as quickly as any other." I was going to school, and one night I went to meeting, but I could not do my duty. The cross was so heavy that I asked the Lord what was the trouble, and He told me I had been too full of fun with the scholars that day. I did not know at the time that what I was doing was wrong, but when I saw I had grieved the Spirit I at once arose and asked the children to forgive me, promising that I would not do so again. God forgave me and I went on my way rejoicing. I got a little Testament, and began to read it through, and said to myself I will do whatever this Testament tells me to do. I had not read very far before I came to where Jesus said, "Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." I said, "That meets the case." I read on and when I came to Ephesians it said lay aside foolish talking and jesting, etc. That settled the matter with me, and I went right on from that time.

Soon after this another boy by the name of George Collins was converted. My boss had moved to another place about three miles away, and this boy and myself used to walk from six to ten miles every Sabbath, and attend two or three meetings. We carried our hymn-books with us, and sang and

talked and prayed. At the close of the day and when we met during the week, we never parted without prayer. One winter my boss hired a man to help him in the shop, and then I went to school for four months, and had the evenings for myself; but this four months' schooling counted for two winters. George and I went to the same school and lived about a mile apart. He would come and study with me, and the next night I would go with him. We always went with each other a part of the way home, and before we separated would pray together and part happy in the Lord. Those were bright days, never to be forgotten. That winter I finished Adams' arithmetic, and that with reading and writing comprised my stock of learning.

The next year my boss moved to Byron, a small town, and the Methodists had a young preacher who would preach like a storm; he would sometimes talk loud and then again low, and would shed some tears, and would apparently throw his whole soul into his work. But as my boss and his wife were Methodists he used to come into our shop often, and was just as full of fun as an egg is of meat. I thought he certainly must be a Christian, or he could not preach so powerfully. That was before I had learned that a smart young man could be put through a school and brought out a preacher just as easily as a chunk of wood could be put into a turning lathe and be turned out a wooden bowl. When I saw the course taken by this young preacher I said I have made a fool of myself now for three years in trying to bridle my

tongue; I will just let loose; and so I allowed the "joking devil" to enter my heart, and as he came in another "get-mad-devil" stepped in also, and then I went into the crooked path system in earnest; and all through the example of a preacher. God help the preachers! I had now entered upon the way of doing things I ought not to do, and of leaving undone things I ought to do. I had gone back from the eighth chapter of Romans into the seventh, and for many years I could truthfully say, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

I got through with my apprenticeship and left the old boss, and went to work for a man by the name of Gray. He had a shop in a place called Sheepskin Corners. I still held on to secret prayer, and tried to live religion. While living there I passed through great temptations, but God gave me restraining grace even in the spiritual state in which I was then living. Praise His name! That summer I met with one of the greatest trials of my life.

CHAPTER III.

MY MOTHER'S health had begun to fail, and I made up my mind that when I was a little older, and had obtained a more perfect knowledge of my trade, I would set up in business for myself. I thought that my brother who was four years younger than I could work with me, and that we could make a home for mother. Then she would not have to weave any more, but could keep house for us. I was then ten miles from home, and took a notion to go and see her. I started one night after work. The moon was shining and the road seemed short as I footed it through. When I reached the little house I knocked, but received no response. On examination, I found the windows all nailed up. I did not know what to do. I went to an old neighbor and inquired what had become of mother. They said that she was married. She could not write, or she would have written me. I laid down that night, but not to sleep much. In the morning I went to see her. She had married a man with a large family of children, and one of them was a foolish girl, then a grown woman. Mother's loom was up, and she had a double task on her hands. Her husband was a man who would drink for awhile, and then sober up and

be very religious; he teamed it for a living. He had learned all about mother, but she knew nothing of him. He brought a recommendation from the church, and she supposed he was all right. He had hurried the matter along for fear of a failure. My heart became faint when I took in the situation, but the die was cast, and what could not now be cured must be endured.

In the Fall of 1844 we all started for Wisconsin. There were ten in the family. We went on the Erie canal to Buffalo and shipped for Milwaukee. We arrived there on the 8th day of October. We were some in debt for freight on our goods. I had saved enough from my earnings to purchase a lumber wagon worth eighty dollars, and this we were obliged to leave in the warehouse for security. My step-father had a span of horses and one cow. One of his boys and one of my brothers and myself took a job of cutting cord-wood, and I worked grubbing out the Spring street road to pay up the debt and help support the family.

In December we moved out near Palmyra and took a fractional piece of land. We built a log house in the dead of winter all out of frozen timber, and moved into it. We hung up blankets for doors, and I kept fires all night by getting up every little while and filling the stove. I never experienced such cold weather before, or since. It seemed as though the cold would just catch hold of me as I would get up out of bed. After the house and stable were finished, we boys cut wood and split rails to

get a living. We had one cow, and mother used to make porridge, and this with our johnny-cake would be relished by us as much as the rich people relish their dainties. That was our principal living, with a little pork as we could get it by hard knocks. But the Lord gave us good health, and a good appetite. Bless His name!

In the Spring I struck out for work. That was the first and last time I was compelled to search for employment. I obtained a steady job in Troy, Walworth county, in a blacksmith shop. I earned money to pay for the land we had pre-empted. I worked for the same man two years. He bought a farm and I went on the farm and worked the next summer, and attended school a little the next winter. In the spring I went home. My stepfather had gone to drinking, and was about to go under soul and body. Mother was crying; all of the children had gone away from home except three. The children and mother wanted me to come home, and father said that he would stop drinking if I would come home and take hold of things; and for mother's sake I consented to do so, but it was a bitter experience for me. My stepfather only stopped his drinking a few months and then was as bad as ever. In the meantime a man moved into our neighborhood from the state of New York who was an old Methodist by the name of Teachout. I became acquainted with his daughter, Hannah, and on April 25th, 1847, we were married. She was a stout girl, and had always worked out. I thought it would help my mother,

but it was not long before things took a turn and we moved into a shanty with a board roof which leaked so badly when it rained that we would have to get up and put our bed under the table to keep dry. My wife was a despondent person, and took it to heart so much that her health failed and she never enjoyed good health afterwards. About this time father got mad one day and caught me by the hair of my head and pulled me down and said he had a mind to kick me in the face. I told him if it would do him any good he might do so. Here grace triumphed, and this brought us to a settlement. I gave him the use of the farm for a number of years and moved to Troy again, and went to work in the shop.

About a year from that time I moved to Little Prairie and started in business for myself. I had kept up a profession of religion all the time and prayed regularly at the family altar, but a part of the time I was in Egypt and a part of the time in the wilderness. About this time a man by the name of Ebenezer Bunce was sent to the Palmyra circuit by the Methodist Episcopal conference, and one day he came into my shop and introduced himself to me. He took me by the hand and held it with a firm grip, and looked me right in the eye, and said, "Do you enjoy religion?" I said, "Not much." He said he had been sent here by the conference, and he thought he would besiege the devil's citadel first. The place was a four corners with a liquor hotel, a store and a shoe shop, and a few other

buildings. It was called "Hell's Four Corners." He said that there would be a meeting at the schoolhouse on a certain evening and asked me to come out. He then stepped to another anvil where my brother-in-law was working, and took hold of his hand, black with dirt, and held it with a salvation grip, and asked him the same question: "Do you enjoy religion?" My brother trembled and said, "No, I am a wicked sinner." The preacher then invited him to the meeting also. In this way he visited the neighborhood, and a revival broke out. My wife and myself, my wife's sister and several more were reclaimed. One Sunday morning my wife's sister asked her husband to go to meeting with her, but he said, "No, you go if you want to; I am going to the tavern to have a spree"; and he went and got another man drunk and put him in a stall in the barn and watered him with a pail like a horse. That night my brother-in-law and one of his chums went to meeting and stayed to class, and we were afraid thinking that they had stayed to make fun, but when the preacher came around where they were he said, "Mr. Jones, will you speak?" My brother-in-law arose and broke all down, and said, "Mr. Bunce, I have not had one minute's rest since you shook hands with me in the shop that day." He and his chum, Steven Olds, both broke down and were converted. The revival continued with power. The devil got mad and turned us out of the schoolhouse, but the people went to Milwaukee, thirty-two miles distant, and got lumber and built a

church; and in six days we were holding meetings in the new building. Praise the Lord! Our Jesus is a conquering King. The revival spread and the whole place was set on fire.

The man who held this revival meeting began to preach when he was sixteen years of age. He was a poor scholar and was obliged to study his hymns and scripture lesson so as to be able to read them when he came before the people. His congregations were large. On one occasion while the first hymn was being sung, he was looking for the second, but was unable to find it, and he got scared and went out and ran away. But the old class-leader gave out another appointment, and persuaded him to preach, and the result was that several were saved. He afterwards married and tried to make a living at secular work, but he was thwarted at every turn. This year he had started out with a wife and two children. They were so poor that he was compelled to travel his large circuit on foot. O, for more such firebrands! They would set the country all on fire while some of our learned, talented preachers would be lighting a match. His wife was taken sick at my house and died in a few days. An epidemic struck the neighborhood and a good many died in a short time. Our firstborn, six months old, was taken sick and died in six hours. Our hopes were blasted; but this affliction was for our good.

I was always honest. My business increased, and one Sunday one of my best customers came and wanted me to set a shoe for him. I refused to do it,

but told him I would get up at twelve o'clock at night and do it for him, but he became angry and engaged another man to come and set up a shop in opposition to me. One day this man came into my shop. I saw he was a blacksmith and asked him if he was the man that was going to start a shop there. He said that he was. I told him to come on that there was plenty to do, and if he had more than he could do to let me know, and I would come over and help him, that if he wanted anything I had I would lend it to him, and we would be on good terms. He went to the man who had got him to come and told him that he was not coming there to set up a shop in opposition to a man who was as honest as I appeared to be, and he did not come; and so grace triumphed again. God's ways are the best, always.

CHAPTER IV.

WHILE I lived in Little Prairie I received my call to preach. An old Freewill Baptist preacher, who was preaching for us, one day related his experience. He said that when he was converted the Lord called him to preach. He was ignorant and had no talent, and it was only after a great struggle that he consented to heed the divine call. While he was telling his experience he wept freely and the Lord spoke very plainly to my heart, and said, "After you are forty years of age you will have to leave the shop and go to preaching." It made a wonderful impression on me. If I had been able I would have left my work and have gone to school, but I was poor and had a family, and as business increased the call seemed to grow weaker. After our child died my wife became despondent, and I traded my property for property in Troy, Wisconsin, and moved there; but it was partly to get rid of responsibilities that fell upon me in the class at Little Prairie. My wife often said that we ran away from God. I began in Troy with an apprentice boy, but business increased until I had seven men at work for me, and carried on wagon making, blacksmithing and painting. I worked in the shop with the

boys during the day and often did outside work at night while the others were at rest. Here we buried little Georgie who was eighteen months of age. He was always sickly but very patient. He was my pet. We took him to Little Prairie and buried him beside his brother Henry. My wife's father and mother were buried there also.

While I lived in Troy I was class-leader and steward in the Methodist Episcopal church at East Troy. Here I attended my first and last donation party. It was in a large two story house, and it was all that we could do to keep the young people quiet. That was before they were allowed to run loose and before the church members ran and played with them. At its close I told the brethren that I had paid twenty dollars a year to the preacher, and received and collected the subscriptions, and many times at the close of the year I had paid some of the subscriptions and charged it up on my account with my customers, and if they could not support the preacher without more money they might call on me, and I would increase the amount of my subscription, but that I would never attend any more church spees. They afterwards tried to get me to go and keep order, but I never did. I had a very low state of grace, but I saw that such things were wrong. I was a leader of a week-day evening class, and Brother Dart was leader of the Sunday noon class, but neither of us lived out real justification. We had to go two miles to church and would attend each other's class-meeting. Sometimes on Sunday

I would get up with "Sunday sickness," and at such times he would be sure to come over and see if I was not ready, and would say, "Are you not going to church to-day?" And I would say, "I have got the headache to-day and feel bad and cannot go." But he would not let me off, and I would get ready and go and get blest and would come home feeling well. Perhaps the next Sunday I would go over and find him down with the same disease, and he would beg off, and want me to go and lead his class, but I would insist upon his going. He was a good singer and he would sing and I would lead his class for a short time, and then turn it over to him, and he would get blest and go home rejoicing.

About this time we had a very good preacher. He visited the people of East Troy and labored and preached faithfully. One day he came to preach, and said, "Brethren, you must come down to East Troy and help us for the people are all under conviction." We went down and found doctors, lawyers, merchants and many others deeply convicted, and the revival soon began in earnest. Then the preacher began to shape things so as to catch the big fish. When an illiterate person would arise to testify who could not speak fluently, he would say, "Be brief, brother." This of course silenced our little guns. If one talked or sang who was free of speech he would give him plenty of rope. He had a very good local preacher who did the most of the preaching, as the circuit preacher's lungs were weak, and he said to him, "Preach short, not more than thirty

minutes at the longest;" but the local preacher said that he could not tell anything about time when he got to going. The preacher said that when he had preached long enough he would pull his coat tail gently. A few pulls at the coat tails used him up, the revival ended, and but few were saved, and these were the poorest and wickedest in the village. This preacher meant well. The Methodists held their meetings in a small old schoolhouse. They had an old log parsonage, and he thought that if he could get the rich men in, it would help them in building. He failed in this and built extravagantly and became heavily involved. They raised a few of the seats higher than the rest, and we had our first choir. About this time they said, "We must have an educated ministry. Other people have educated and talented preachers, and unless we have them, and choirs and fine churches we can not reach the people." Then up went the seminaries and colleges, and the preachers were less and less spiritual every year. One year we had a young man, the son of a presiding elder, sent to us, and one day Brother Dart looked out of the shop door, and a young man was coming with a plug hat stuck on one side of his head and puffing a cigar. Brother Dart said, "That is our preacher, what shall we do?" We decided to endure it through the year hoping that the next year we would have a better man sent to us. But we kept on drawing blanks.

About this time I was the leader of a class of young people, and often met those who needed to

be visited at their homes, but I was crowded with business and had no time for such work. I told the Lord that if my business was in my way to take it out of my way, and I meant it too, and God knew that I meant it. The time had come when I needed more room to carry on my business properly, so I built larger shops and a house for myself. In order to do this I was obliged to go into debt heavily. The times changed and I could not sell the articles we were making, and business failure stared me in the face. I was too proud to break down, and so arranged my business as best I could and went to California to obtain money with which to meet my obligations. I worked hard, early and late, but at last I made a failure in worldly matters.

I still kept up my profession, but only endured religion the most of the time. At last I saw that crooked paths would end in hell, and I would be a wreck temporally and spiritually. I settled the matter with the Lord and promised to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. I had a hard time to get that stake driven, but as soon as God saw that I meant business, he came to my help and blessed me in a wonderful manner. I did not sleep much that night. The Bible seemed like a new book to me. From the time I lost my religion over the preacher, and gave way to joking, I had given a loose rein to that propensity, and had become a practical joker; and then I would sometimes get mad and throw things around pretty lively when they did not go to suit me; and there were also other

devils which had come in so that my heart was as a cage of unclean birds. Oh! I wish I could draw a curtain over that part of my life, but it can not be blotted out of my mind. I am glad to say, however, that the past is all under the blood. Praise God! The blood does over all prevail and sanctifies the unclean.

The next day I had complete victory over joking, getting mad, and everything else that was wrong. Saturday night came and I was very tired having worked hard all the week. I sat down a few moments expecting soon to go to rest, but the Lord said, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." I said, "I will, Lord." The Lord then said, "Go and wash and shave and clean your boots and get ready for the Sabbath." Obedience was written on my heart, and I obeyed like a little child. In the morning I awoke at five o'clock and the Lord said, "Get up and go to the colored church to meeting." They had a prayer-meeting at that hour every Sunday morning. I went and was greatly blessed. I then attended our Sabbath-school at nine o'clock, which was followed by preaching and class-meeting. At 2 p. m. I went to the Dutch Reform church, and at 4 p. m. to the colored meeting again. I closed up the day happy, and was ready for work on Monday morning, and my work went easy all that week. The next Sunday I went on with the same routine until 2 o'clock when I thought I would write to my wife. She remained at Troy, Wisconsin, during my stay in California. When I was ready to write with

pen in hand, the Lord said to me, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." I said, "Lord, I was going to write and tell my wife how happy I am," but He said, "You will write something about business, too." I obeyed again and put up my writing material and went to meeting. I tell you it does not take long for the Lord to straighten us out when we are willing to walk in the light. Of course I let my light shine, and the preacher said I had received the blessing of holiness, but I said, "No. I have only got back what I had when a boy with a little more added to it, for I am older and know more now." I said that I believed in holiness, and had enjoyed the experience once at Little Prairie, Wisconsin, for about two weeks, and that when I saw the need of it I should seek it again.

I wrote to my wife and told her how the Lord was blessing me. When she replied she told me that a man had sent an appointment to Troy, and that when he came several loads of people had come with him, and that he had preached on holiness. She said that nearly all of them testified that they were entirely sanctified, and that those who did not so testify were earnestly seeking the experience. She also spoke of the good hymns they sang. She said, "We Troy folks could not say anything, the wind was all taken out of our sails. If you were here I think you would join them, by the way you write. They called themselves Free Methodists." When I came to that in the letter, I looked up and said, "Free Methodists!" That was the first time I

had heard the name. "Well," said I, "I am free and a Methodist, and it must be I am a Free Methodist." I was not hatched under a Free Methodist hen, but I was one of the same brood.

CHAPTER V.

IN A few months after I was justified I saw the need of holiness. I was really convicted for the experience and sought it definitely and with great determination. After seeking for two weeks I went to a meeting held in a private house by two lay sisters of the M. E. church. These sisters were but little thought of by the church. I went to them for instruction. They probed me on the line of consecration as closely as they could and failed to find anything lacking, and I could not see but that I was fully consecrated to God. They then tried to get me to believe, but I could not. They might as well have tried to make water run up hill. One of them told me that there must be something I was still holding back and that when I came to that idol and gave it up the blessing would come. She said that when I became intent enough so that the Lord could show me what it was, he would do so, but if he should let me see it now I might think it was the devil tempting me. She said, "Let every breath be, 'Lord, sanctify my soul.'" It was timely advice and I took it and acted upon it. I soon became so much in earnest that every blow struck on the anvil was accompanied with the prayer, "Lord, sanctify me."

One day as I was on the street on my way to dinner, while crossing an alley, the Lord said to me, "You want the blessing of holiness do you?" I stopped, folded my arms and looked up in the direction from which the voice seemed to come and said, "Yes, Lord," and He said, "What if I should require you to leave the M. E. church?" And then the church passed before me, all graded off—the bishops came first, then the presiding elders, the circuit preachers, the local preachers, the exhorters, the class-leaders and stewards. Then came the laity with plug hats and gold headed canes, and with silks and satins fluttering. I could see that they were popular. Then came their wealth—their meeting-houses, academies and seminaries, and everything all so grand. After that there passed before me a few commonly dressed people, and I could see that they were not popular. The Lord said, "If I should call you to leave all these grand ones and join the few despised ones will you do it?" I threw up my hand and cried, "O, my God!" Then the scene passed before me again, and as the few came along, I looked to see whether there was anything to admire about them, and their faces were shining with glory. Then I said, "Lord, I will do anything," and the blessing came. There was no ecstasy, but a deep heavenly peace filled my soul. It seemed to me for several days that I was just as the disciples were in the boat after Jesus had said, "Peace be still," there was a great calm in my soul.

The first time I testified to it was at a church

where the colored people held their meetings. The congregations were mixed—black and white. A white man, an old peddler, had preached on holiness and was greatly blessed, so that he jumped in the pulpit. When he had finished he said that if any one wished to testify to the experience of holiness, they had the privilege. I arose and told them that the Lord had sanctified me soul, body and spirit. I then opened my eyes and looked around on the congregation. From a child I had suffered from bashfulness, and often I could not look up or act natural, but it was all gone now. I walked up and down the aisle of the church, and exhorted the people to get a "know-so" salvation. After I had taken my seat the temptation came very forcibly that the people would think that I "felt big," that by the way I had talked, I felt head and shoulders above them, so I sprang to my feet and stepped up on a seat, and began to cry, and said, "Perhaps you think I feel big, but I don't. I can lay down on the floor and let you walk over me if it will do any good." I had gone into the church as artless as a child, in hopes to get them saved.

But now the war commenced. I saw there were but few that wanted what their own Bible and discipline taught. This took such a hold upon me and affected me so much that I could sympathize with Paul when he said he could wish himself accursed for his brethren. The Lord had to bring me up on a bottle, so to speak, as there was no one to help me spiritually. The preachers and people were against

me and branded me as a fanatic. In this state of mind I went out one night to pray, and I told the Lord I knew he had saved me and if I had switched on to a side track, I would confess my way back, if He would just let me know the truth. Presently Jesus seemed to stand before me. He looked so kind and innocent and said to me, "Are you any better than I?" I wept and felt as though I would sink away into the sand. I said, "I am but a worm, Jesus." He said, "Did I not come to my own and my own received me not, will you endure for my sake?" I said, "Yes, Jesus." Then I began to think that I must be wrong, for the preacher said I was, and a great man that had written a work on holiness, said I was wild. "Lord," said I, "just show me where it is, and I will make it all right." And as I was praying and crying, Jesus stood before me again, and said, "Are you better than I am? Did not the high priest stand by and consent to my death? What is this preacher but a high priest? Will you stand it?" I replied, "My Lord, and my God." I took the cross and went forward through evil report and good report. I had no Free Methodist to help me, but Jesus helped me, and that was better than all other help. Bless His name! In 1862 I went back to Wisconsin, to my wife and family, and Brother Dart and myself went to Heart Prairie to a quarterly meeting. That was the first I ever saw of the Free Methodists. On our return Brother Dart said to me, "How did you like them?" I said, "How did you?" He said, "Well, they are

just old-fashioned Methodists." I said, "If they ever come to Troy and form a class I shall join them." He replied that there was much to be considered; they were a common, poor people, and if they should fail, how would it look, or how would we feel, to go sneaking back to the old church?" I said, "They are right, are they not?" He said, "Yes." I said, "I dare stand by the right, if it goes down I will go down with it."

In the spring of 1863 I moved to the state of Michigan. I purchased forty acres of timbered land and moved on to it. In the month of June I organized a Sabbath-school in an old log schoolhouse, and after the session of the Sabbath-school was dismissed I would hold a prayer-meeting. It was in the time of the war, and the people were very poor.

In July I went to Iowa to a Sabbath-school convention. When the superintendents made their reports, some had fifty and some had one hundred scholars, and many of them had raised a considerable amount of money for books. I sat back in the church with coarse clothes on and began to tremble, but I took the cross and said, "If it were not for the old adage that large oaks grow from little acorns, I would not dare to give in my report. I have a school of twenty scholars up in the woods. We have the old Sabbath School Bell singing book and the children can sing well, and I have come to beg some of your old books; and I expect to see a dozen of my scholars converted before next December." That was the first that had been said about conver-

sion. They all looked at me and the devil hopped on to my back and rode there. He often told me during the summer that I had lied, but in the fall as the old people began to turn to God, the children came to me and wanted a prayer-meeting. I appointed one and there were twelve that were soundly converted, and my oldest son, Lewis, was reclaimed at that meeting.

In the month of September we began to hold prayer-meetings around at private houses, and a good class of twenty-eight was raised up, nearly all being children. The power of God was among them. I wrote to Rev. E. P. Hart and asked for a preacher, but he could not send us one at that time. Different ones came around and wanted to string my fish, and the children desired to be baptized, and partake of the sacrament, so I went four miles to the village of Saranac and got an M. E. preacher to come and form a class. He did so and stayed all night and took one of my boys and went out on Lake Morrison fishing, instead of visiting the members. He got into the lake and got wet and I was glad of it. He had a young man who assisted him who came once in two weeks to preach to us.

During the summer of 1864 I attended a camp-meeting among the Methodists. At the close of the evening service the elder in charge appointed a prayer-meeting at Brother Moore's tent. Brother Moore knew me and requested me to attend. When we reached the tent he asked me to sing one of my songs. I did and the tent was soon filled. He then

asked me to take charge of the meeting. I asked how many of them enjoyed holiness. The preacher said, "We do not enjoy it, but we want it," and about a dozen arose expressing a desire for the experience. We then had a season of prayer and all were very much in earnest. The Lord began to work in power. The preacher looked at his watch and said it was time to close. I said it would not do to close then, and he permitted the meeting to continue but soon the presiding elder came in and said, "It is time to close this meeting." I said, "Elder, there are a number who will soon cross over into the land of Canaan, I hope you will not close yet." But he spoke with a commanding voice, and said, "This meeting must come to a close," and they all arose from their knees. The elder then said, "Who is this brother?" I told him that my name was Sage, and that I lived four miles south of Saranac. I said, "Our preacher will be here to-morrow, and will report for me." I then asked him if there was a place where I could sleep. He took me to the rear of the preachers' stand, and I had a good night's rest. The Lord wonderfully blessed my soul.

The next morning at the love-feast the elder said, "The devil always comes to camp-meeting; he was here last night breaking the rules of the meeting." Of course I knew and the people knew whom he meant, but it went clear over my head and Jesus took the blow. After the morning service J. D. Seaman came and shook hands with me, and said, "I see you are a speckled bird here." He took me

into the woods and we had a season of prayer, and he told me his experience. Before his conversion he had been a very wicked sailor, but now he was far in advance of most of the church. He was a wonderful man of faith. I spent the day as best I could and ate food which I had brought with me. After meeting that night as there was no prayer-meeting appointed, I sat down on a log and said, "Jesus, if I am worthy of a place to stay send some one to invite me, if not I will not murmur, for I am no better than my divine Master." Immediately after this a man invited me into his tent to stay. Said he, "We must have prayers before ten o'clock." I told them if they desired anything of the Lord to just ask, and he would answer quickly. They prayed in earnest. J. D. Seaman, who was kneeling in the center of the tent, prayed with much power. I felt so small that I put my face on the ground, and said to myself, "If we only had some one here who could help these souls through before ten o'clock." At that moment I heard a man in the corner of the tent crying mightily to God. I spoke in an encouraging way to him, and in a few moments his groans were turned to shoutings. I said, "Glory to God, here is a man who has sold out." I then spoke to several sisters who were forward the night before, and asked them what they were seeking. One of them said, "We wish to sell out, if that is what you call it," and they went through on a run. In the meantime the elder had sent a man to close the meeting, but he knew that the Spirit of God was in the place, and stopped

at the door and allowed the meeting to continue. The elder then sent a second man who did the same as the first one had done. A third man was then sent, but the Almighty had the start of the elder and souls were saved.

The next summer I went four miles away and found another schoolhouse and formed another Sabbath-school, and held that one and the one at home. In the fall I held another protracted meeting by prayer-meetings from house to house, and a class of twenty-four was raised up.

About this time a brother from Wisconsin and his wife came and told us that the Free Methodists had all run wild, and he proposed to raise up a new organization, and as I supposed my hopes were all blasted in regard to the Free Methodists, I consented, and he took several disciplines and framed a new one called the American Methodist church, and I joined it and was sent to Wisconsin to preach. I soon found by acquaintance that the Free Methodists were not all fanatics. When I was asked why we were a separate people or organization, the only reason I could give was that the Free Methodists had run wild, and that put a club into the hands of their enemies with which to abuse them. After careful investigation I withdrew from the new organization, and the organization failed.

I went back home and continued to labor in Sunday-schools and tried to talk to the people as best I could. One summer I walked seventeen miles on Sunday, and held two Sunday-schools, and talked

to the people two or three times. Another summer I walked ten miles out and taught a Sabbath-school, and on my return held one school and talked to the people three times, making twenty miles travel after working hard all the week. Finally, Brothers E. P. Hart and John Ellison came and held quarterly meetings and formed classes for us, and sent us a preacher. Brother Hart wrote me that they had sent us a preacher, but that he was only a boy. The new preacher was Perry Miller, a converted fiddler.

About this time W. R. Cusick was sent to Coopersville as chairman. I met him one day as he was on the road from New York state with a horse and sulky, and we took dinner together. As he left me he said, "Hold them to the line, Brother Sage. It is holiness or burn." When the young preacher came on I was engaged in the building of a schoolhouse. I gave him a list of the members, and he went out visiting, and soon struck in for protracted meetings at two different points where I had held Sunday-schools during the summer. I went fourteen miles away to hold meetings where two good brethren, one a Wesleyan, and the other an M. E., had engaged me to go. The meeting was to be held in a large schoolhouse, and the settlement was large and rich. Before this I had been in the woods laboring, and when the time came around for me to start, I had the "grasshopper" experience, and felt so small that it seemed to me I could not go, but my wife pushed me out, and I started. It seemed to me, however, that the devil rode two-thirds of the

way with me, but the Lord helped me and in a few days Brother Miller and his wife came, and the work moved in a wonderful manner. One day as we went across the woods to visit the people, we knelt in the snow to pray. I prayed first and while Brother Miller was praying I told the Lord I would work all my life and hold meetings and build churches and parsonages, and let some one else go to conference and report them if need be, and I got wonderfully blessed.

Brother W. R. Cusick came and held a few meetings. On the third night he clenched his fists and preached hell-fire until the cold chills seemed to run over us. "Here," he would say, "you fellows over there in the corner that don't like to hear hell talked about; horse thieves and pickpockets don't like to hear state's prison talked about, but there's a hell and you'll get there unless you repent." After this sermon the very worst cases in the community came running like a flock of sheep to the altar. He held a quarterly meeting and organized a class. Out of two meetings, which were held for about eleven weeks, we had a membership of eighty-five. It was perfectly wonderful to see what God could do with such poor tools to work with. It certainly was God and not man.

Brother Cusick was chairman at this time and I was a local preacher, and both of us were on crutches, that is as far as education was concerned. He could hardly read his hymns, and I could only read and write a little, but we hobbled along the best we could.

If we had not had the eternal go through in us, we would have made a failure. The Lord had to raise us above our surroundings, and put us through on the dead run, or we could not have gone at all. One night my wife asked me if I knew what a mistake I had made while preaching. I told her I did not. She then told me that I had Lazarus in hell, and the rich man in heaven. Then I just snuggled down beside Jesus and told him that he would have to take care of it for I had done the best I could, and I never heard from it again for which I praised the Lord. The foundation of this revival I always attributed to the holy living in that community of Fathers How and Town. Example is worth more than precept.

CHAPTER VI.

THE next June we held the first camp-meeting that was held in what is now called the North Michigan conference. I went three days beforehand and helped fit up the ground. I put up three board tents; one for myself, and two to be occupied by some who had drawn out of the American Methodist movement, and who were prejudiced against us. My family came and we remained all through the meeting. God came in power; eight fell like dead men at one time. I set a higher estimate on manifestations then than I do now. I supposed if a person lost his strength or ran or shouted, or did something of that kind, it would be the means of establishing him so that he would never backslide. But in less than six months two of the best specimens of those who fell were backslidden. It is not the notch that we get into in our experience but the abiding in Jesus that counts. Souls were saved and believers sanctified at this meeting, and the work of God received a wonderful impetus. The rowdies came to break up the meeting, and, as I had preached so much in raising up the work, I told the brethren to put me on the committee to keep order. The boys came on in force, and a tall fellow who had on a

high hat was the captain. One of the brethren told me to get a good cudgel, and if they molested me to lay them out, but I said, "My Bible says they that use the sword shall perish by the sword. I shall go out unarmed." I met the boys and treated them kindly, and was around among them all the evening. It was a dense forest and not very well lighted. That was before we had tabernacles and lamps. After preaching was over, while the altar service was in progress, the boys came quite near and one after another began to climb a little tree to see which could climb the highest. I stood there among them, and as one came down I said, "He is a good climber, but be as quiet as you can so as not to disturb the congregation." At this the captain said, "You have been watching us all the evening and I would like to know what it is for." I said, "Come back here I want to talk with you." I went back with them and sat down on a log with the boys all around me. I told them I was put on the committee of order, and it was my business to watch them. I supposed they all knew me as I had labored so much around there, but I did not know one of them in the dark. Some way the Lord had helped me all through the protracted meetings I had held there to keep good order without getting them mad at me. Finally one of them said if he knew the way out of the woods he would go home. The underbrush was thick and it was very dark. I said, "Boys, stay as long as you wish, but if you want to go home, I will get a lantern and light you out of the bush." To this they all

agreed. I lighted them out and helped them hitch up their horses, and bid them good night. Another night we heard that they were coming to tear down the tents, and we went to prayer. They got into a drunken fight and row among themselves and never troubled us any more. I believe the great God is better than all the police forces to keep order and get souls saved. Brother Myron DeVoist was saved at this camp-meeting.

My neighbors said that they always thought that I was a little "off" on religion, but now they knew that I was nearly "crazy." I had been gone ten or twelve days when my corn needed hoeing. When we returned home we went through the corn the first week, and cleaned out the weeds. The next week we went into our haying; we had ten acres to cut with scythes as the fields were full of stumps. I was not used to mowing and my boy had had the fever and ague. I told him to take it easy, so he mowed the lightest and I took the heaviest. But about nine o'clock that morning one of my neighbors offered to mow for me if my boy would take my team and go to mill for him. At night he offered to bring his boy the next day and said they would both mow provided I would let my boy and team assist him in return, later. Then another neighbor came and offered to mow on the same conditions. I was thus greatly favored and we got our hay all in that week without a drop of rain, and we were ahead of all our neighbors. I find it pays to sacrifice for God. It is wonderful how the Lord helps those who help them-

selves,—those who seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. I went headlong for God, and then God turned around and paid it back to me an hundredfold. When I first began there I had forty acres of land, nearly all timbered, and I owed fifty dollars on it. I had but one cow and no team, and I had a family of six to support, so I was obliged to work out to make ends meet. One summer I could not find work, so I hired an old shop four miles away, and did blacksmithing. On Sundays I traveled twenty miles on foot, and held two Sunday-schools, and talked to the people three times. It was the hardest day of the week. There were two Catholic Dutchmen who carried on a shop near me, and one day one of them said, "Sage he breaches all day Zunday, and den on Monday the gustomers come in und fill the shop." Things turned in my favor in every direction. My own family thought I was going too fast and was too honest, but God was on my side.

Some time after this a quarterly meeting was held not far from us at what was called the Sage schoolhouse. The converts came down in droves; I had forty for dinner on Saturday, and kept twenty-five all night, and fifteen on Sunday night; we got blessed, and they did not eat us out of house and home either. My wife said that she could not see that we missed anything; we had just as much as before they all came. The women made up beds for themselves by dividing up the bedding, and we men took the floor for our bed. This is the way Free

Methodism was raised up in North Michigan and in Canada. It is "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." We, like Gideon, went in with our might and God added his might to it and on it went.

When I closed up and sold my things to go out laboring for God and souls, I had a good lumber wagon that I had made myself. One of the brethren wanted it at private sale, and wanted to know what I would take for it. I told him it was worth eighty dollars, but I said it would have to go at auction as it was on the bill. I had thirty sheep to sell, and the auctioneer said, "Sell the choice of ten, and then the next ten, then the culls." He did so and when they were bidding on the culls, I would have gladly stopped them, for they were bidding more than they were worth. When they divided the sheep, the man who had bid on the culls saw that he had paid too much. I said, "You are sick of your bargain?" "Yes," he said, "but I shall have to stand it." I said, "No, you will not. You look them over and tell me what you think they are worth." He did so and I took the amount he named and felt good. The wagon had been sold for eighty-eight dollars. I said, "Draw the note for eighty dollars." The auctioneer said, "What is the use of a man wearing out his lungs selling goods for you?" But this was following out the Golden Rule, and I enjoyed religion, and saved up more money in eight years than I had in twenty years before in the crooked path system. "Godliness is profitable unto

all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

Father Marshall, an exhorter in the Freewill Baptist church, held a successful revival in Cortland, Michigan, and wrote to Rev. E. P. Hart to come and form them into a Free Methodist class; and Brother Hart wrote me to go and hold a quarterly meeting and form a society, and attend to the ordinance of baptism. I went with a heavy heart. It was a great cross, but the Lord came to our help; a good class was formed and left in the hands of Brother Marshall. That was the beginning of our work in that part of the country. This was while I was a local preacher.

About this time as I was working in my harvest, two brethren, Horace Spears and his brother-in-law, J. Witham, a Methodist Protestant preacher, drove up to my place and wanted me to go and hold a quarterly meeting for them. They pulled off their coats and finished cutting my wheat, and then I got into the buggy and went with them. He said his class was doing well but needed holiness. On Friday night I took a text on justification and could not get beyond repentance. On Saturday afternoon I took a text that embraced both states of grace, but could not get beyond justification. In the evening Brother Witham wanted me to go and hold an old fashioned prayer-meeting, and get his members forward for holiness. So I told him to go ahead, and I would find my place. He went at it and got all the class forward but one, and they began to pray to

God to have mercy on them and forgive their sins and shortcomings, and so on. I cried out, "There is plenty of water if you go deep enough; pray through and you will strike an artesian well," and the most of them did strike the fountain of living waters; and it loosened up the roots of their rag roses and dimmed their galvanized pewter, and that soon dropped off. We had a good time and got back to Brother Witham's after midnight. We obtained but little sleep that night, as we had a school teacher with us who had to go to her school on Monday morning, a number of miles away. As we were driving along, feeling very dull and sleepy, suddenly the Spirit came on me and I began to sing, and then the Spirit came on us all. Brother Spears threw his head back and began to laugh so that you could have heard him twenty rods away, and the school teacher began to cry; the big tears rolled down her cheeks for joy. She afterwards became the wife of Rev. C. A. Cusick. Sister Spears kept the tune with her head and hands, as no one else but she could do. A man who was riding with us looked on in amazement. If any one else had seen us as we passed along, he might have thought we were drunk. Well, we were filled with the new wine of the kingdom.

About three months after this Brother Witham asked me to hold another quarterly meeting for him I went and took a wagon load of saints from the Orleans circuit. One of them was Sister Hannah Clark of blessed memory. A few months before this, before Sister Clark was converted, she, with one

of her disciple sisters, had come to one of our camp-meetings out of curiosity. During the forenoon but little was done, and her sister wanted to go home, as they lived near, but she said, "No, we have not seen 'the elephant' yet. Some one will preach this afternoon that will raise a dust, and we must see him." She little thought that she would be the elephant. In the afternoon she obtained a seat within the space called the altar, which was inclosed by a railing, as we had no tabernacle in those days. The Spirit of the Lord fell upon the people, and she fell under the power of God, and lay there some time, but was too proud to confess her sins, and as soon as she was able, she arose and went home. She could not remain away, however, but returned for the evening meeting. That night there was not much accomplished at the altar. After the meeting was dismissed, I met Sister Spears. She and her husband had joined the church when the class was organized. She was a very consistent Christian in every way, but had never been satisfied with her experience. I said to her, "How are you getting along?" She replied, "Not at all." We then went into a tent and began praying, and the power of God fell upon us. I began singing, "The cross for Christ I'll cherish," and Sister Spears sprang up and raised her hand for me to stop. I did, and she said, "You need not sing that for me, now; I can bear the cross with delight." We then began to sing something lively, and Sister Spears began to keep the time with her head and hands. She looked more like an angel than a

woman. Then Brother C. B. Barrett, the happy Alleghanian, jumped three times very modestly, and sat down, and Hannah Clark said in her heart, "He acts like a fool, anyway;" and at that she fell across a chest with her feet on one side, and her head on the other. We thought God understood his own business, and we went on with the meeting. Presently she gained her strength and went home. The next night we had an after-meeting in a tent and she sat across the tent from the door. The power of God came upon us, and she said to herself, "I shall have to leave here, or I shall make another spectacle for them to look at," and as she walked across the tent she fell; then she prayed, confessed and was gloriously converted, and the Holy Ghost fell upon her. Before that she had only been baptized with a "water ghost." Sister Clark attended this second quarterly meeting, and on Saturday afternoon, she with others, was ripe for holiness, and came forward for the experience. God came and many were sanctified, and she among the rest. I saw her holding her handkerchief close to her mouth and shaking all over. She had been much annoyed with Brother Spears because of his laughing, and now she was blessed in the same way. Suffice it to say we had a glorious meeting, and the preacher, Brother Witham, and his class, joined the Free Methodist church, and he united with the conference the next fall. That was the beginning of our work in the vicinity of Greenville, Michigan.

We raised up a class at Berlin Center, Ionia

county, and Brother E. P. Hart came to hold a quarterly meeting. A number had joined there who had been in the habit of officiating in the M. E. church. I had always carried the elements for the communion far and near. This place was six miles from my house, and as so many former officials lived there I did not make any provision for the love-feast or the communion service. I did not feel very much blessed over it and took a seat a little back that morning. Brother Hart came to me and wanted to know if any provision had been made. I said I had not made any, that I thought they could attend to it, and so ease up on me a little. He said to me, "If you think it will ever be any easier on you, you are grandly mistaken, for it will be piled on you heavier and heavier as long as you live." These were indeed prophetic words. Surely I have found them true. We succeeded in making the necessary arrangements and had a good meeting, but I learned a lesson I have never forgotten.

CHAPTER VII.

WHILE I was a local preacher I held meetings ten or twelve miles west of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and also at Six Corners, Michigan, and I became acquainted with Brother S. Johnson who afterwards joined the conference and did efficient work for the Master for years. He has now been laid aside for some time on account of failing health, but still lives at Saranac, Michigan. While I was living four miles south of Saranac, a young man and woman came forty miles to stay over Sunday and wanted me to marry them. I asked if they would be willing to have a public wedding, and they said they would. I had preaching at the schoolhouse near by in the forenoon and announced that the wedding would be at my house that night. Then I said that Jesus attended a wedding while on earth, and I expected Him to be present. The house was filled. The bridegroom was a backslider, but the bride was a good Christian girl. After prayer and singing I spoke a few words to the people and then talked to the couple to be married as best I could concerning the step they were about to take. I asked the young man if he had not better come right now to Jesus. Said I, "Come back to Father's house where there is

bread enough and to spare." He said, "Yes," and after the ceremony was performed he was reclaimed.

Up to this time I had held meetings every Sunday and worked six days each week at hard manual labor and supported the cause, and I would have gladly continued, but the revivals I held winters would die out in a measure during the summers for want of proper care; and I saw plainly that I ought to devote all my time to the work. I was then about forty-four years old, with but little means and but little book learning. I trembled in view of the responsibilities attached to a circuit preacher, and with a heavy heart I went to conference. When I got there I told them that I had always been used to hard work, and it would be better if they would give me a place of entertainment two or three miles out and let me walk; they did so. One morning I saw that we were early and I spoke to two brethren who were walking with me and said that we had better have a season of prayer. They called on me to pray, and I had only begun before they struck fire and shouted and praised God in a wonderful manner. When I stopped praying the devil said to me, "Just see, they are like a tinder box, and a spark sets them all ablaze. You do not enjoy even the commonest kind of religion. You had better go home and not offer yourself to the conference." But I knew them both and was acquainted with their labors, and while they were extremely straight and I could not hold a candle to them as regards preaching or praying, yet a moment's reflection enabled me to see that I had

reached more souls than they, while I had known them; and it seemed to me that soul saving was the real business of a gospel preacher. That settled the matter with me, and the devil left me for a season. I was called up before the conference and questioned. I told them I was in debt and if they would give me a work near home, I would pay my debts and build a barn—I had the lumber with which to build for I expected to leave my family on the place—and after one year they could send me anywhere. They received me into the conference on trial, and sent me back to the work I had raised up. This was in September, 1870. I took care of the work, paid my debts, built the barn, and began to make preparations to go. I traded a cow for a horse, and when I got ready to make a buggy my wife told me that I had better make it strong enough to carry her and two of the children, and she would go with me; and as my oldest son expected to get married, we could leave him and Leslie on the farm. I thanked God and took on courage.

At the next conference, which was held at Spring Arbor, Michigan, September 28, 1871, I was sent to the Flint and Forest circuit. This necessitated a move of one hundred and ten miles. We packed and shipped our goods, and bade good-bye to home and the two children. We drove to our circuit, reaching there about the middle of the afternoon of the third day, and stayed over night with Brother E. Pettis. The next morning I inquired about the circuit and found that it was twenty miles long. I

also learned where all the members lived. There was no parsonage and I traveled over the circuit twice before I found a house in which to live. It did not take us long to get settled. My boy, Charlie, went to husking corn by the bushel, and when winter set in he found a place where he could do chores and go to school.

As soon as we were settled, we took little Frankie, then four years old, and went to visiting the people on the circuit. Many of them had never had a call from a preacher before. We talked, read and prayed with them, urging them all to get saved. There was but little money in the community, but we told the people we would be glad to receive anything we or our horse could eat, and as a result, we usually had our buggy full. It was not a little, narrow, tucked up livery rig, but it held a good supply, and when we worked our circuit as a farmer works his farm, we were always well cared for.

At some points on the circuit we found much difficulty in reaching the people. Our preachers had taught some extreme notions and had encouraged all kinds of manifestations. Our people were honest and had given themselves entirely into God's hands, and he had come in power in different forms, but they had gone to extremes on certain lines, and in some places were bordering on fanaticism, and as a result of this the cause had been brought into disrepute.

After a little time Brother John Ellison came to hold a quarterly meeting, and he took in the situa-

tion and preached with great acceptability, God helping him all the way through. At the close he encouraged me to do my best, and I did, the Lord helping me. We held a revival meeting on the north end of the work and some fifteen were saved. Brother E. Crippen, a son of Sister Crippen of blessed memory, was among the number. I then went to the south end of the work, and thought I saw a chance for a successful revival at two different schoolhouses, but for want of proper advice and encouragement I was hindered, and the meetings were not held. I felt very bad and told the Lord that he would have to help me and give me a good revival that year, or I should certainly become discouraged and go back home, for He knew that I had seen souls saved while laboring in a local capacity.

Presently I received a letter from a young man living two miles from Gaines. He said they had a good class and a Sunday-school and prayer-meetings, and that they all enjoyed justifying grace, but that they wanted holiness. They were members of the M. E. church, but their preacher had left them, and they wanted me to come and hold a revival meeting. I wrote him I would be there on a certain night on my way to St. Johns, where I expected to go to attend our general quarterly meeting, and that I would preach to them, if he would announce an appointment. I drove twenty miles in the afternoon with my wife and child, and when we reached the house where the young man lived, his mother was away taking care of the sick. He sent me about a

mile away, and when I got there they had wood-choppers and could not possibly entertain us. They sent us to another farmer's house, whose wife told us that they had just had a wedding and everything was upside down, and they could not keep us. I asked how far it was to a hotel. She said it was two miles. I told her that I had an appointment at the schoolhouse that night and could not possibly go to a hotel and get my supper, and get back in time for meeting. I told her that this was the third house I had tried and that my wife and child were in the cutter. I said, "We have driven in the cold twenty miles now, what shall we do?" She said to her husband, an honest sinner, "John, can you keep the horse?" He said, "Yes," very readily, and she said that as she was a member of the class, she would do the best she could to care for us. We gladly unloaded and had a good supper and every accommodation that could have been wished. Praise the Lord for good friends in time of need.

We arrived at the schoolhouse in time, had a good congregation and good attention. Of course, they were filled with curiosity as people are when they go to hear a new preacher. I took a plain common text on practical salvation and the Lord helped me. I gave out an appointment for Monday night, on our return from St. Johns, and told them I would stay and hold revival meetings if they wished me to. At the close of the service a man stepped up to me and said his latch-string was always out for preachers, and he described his house and barn and wanted me

to call on my return. On the way home that night the class-leader said to his wife, "How did you like that sermon?" She replied, "I could not help but like it, for it was all Bible, but according to that I have no religion." "Neither have I," said her husband, "but I am going to have it." We went on and attended the quarterly meeting, and returned according to agreement. On Monday night I took for my text, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." Again the Lord helped me and at the close I told them to take a vote, and if they desired it I would hold a meeting for them, but if not I would go on in the morning, as I had a circuit of my own and plenty to do. The man whose latch-string hung out got up and said that he liked the preaching, but thought they had better pay me for what I had done and let me go on, and get one of their own preachers to come and hold a revival. I told him I had not done anything for them yet, and did not want pay. The congregation began to be uneasy, but I told them they must take the vote, for if I took it they would feel obliged to vote for me out of respect. One sinner said to a professor that sat by him, "Put it to a vote. I want religion and I want that kind;" so said others. They finally took a vote and all but two voted for me to stay. I gave out appointments for the week and dismissed the meeting. On our way home the brother said it would make a fuss. I replied that it was a clear vote for me to stay, and that I should see it through. In the morning he said he had not slept much and had come to the

conclusion that they had better go and get Elder Bird, one of their elders, to come and help me. I told him, "No," I could not work with one of their preachers, for I should strike worldly conformity, church sprees and sins of every class and grade, in the church and out of it, and that their preachers would reply and that would make confusion in the meeting. At this his latch-string came in.

I went at the work in earnest and visited every family in the community. It was a large, rich neighborhood, and the meeting was being held in a large schoolhouse which was soon filled to its utmost capacity. I thought my little hands were more than full, and so I sent for Brother John Ellison to come and help me, but he sent back word that any man whom God could use in starting the work, could be used in carrying it through, and that I should go ahead. He said he would come at the close and hold a quarterly meeting and organize a class. Brother C. B. Barrett, the happy Alleghanian, came to my help. He was a man of God, was deeply spiritual and did thorough work. The members of the class nearly all confessed their sins and got justified, and sinners began to cry for mercy. God came in power. I was always ready to go wherever I was invited. One night a Presbyterian who had become very much interested asked me to go to his home. I did so, and when he handed me the Bible, I asked him if he enjoyed religion. He said, "I thought I did before you fellows came here, but you have preached my religion all away." I asked him

what he would do in the judgment if two such small preachers as we were, could preach his religion away. He replied that that was what he was thinking about.

One day the Spirit of the Lord fell upon the people and a good sister lost her strength. This was a great trial to my Presbyterian brother. That night one of his neighbors went forward for prayers, and I appointed a prayer-meeting at this neighbor's house, and this Presbyterian attended the meeting. Quite a number were seeking and this brother also began to cry aloud for mercy. He called for his wife and began to confess to her. That touched her heart, and she said, "You are no more to blame than I am." "But," he said, "never mind yourself, forgive me." The Lord strove with him until he promised to make a business of straightening up. The next day he asked forgiveness of one of his neighbors who was a Baptist, and of another who was a Methodist. He then found a sinner and gave him five dollars which he had taken from him in making change, when buying a pair of boots.

In this way the work went on through the neighborhood for six weeks. Then I again wrote to Brother Ellison to come. He and his wife soon came and it was wonderful how the Lord helped him to preach and his wife to exhort; and yet no one moved; and the converts said but little. I think that they thought Brother Ellison's thunder had killed all my goslings, but this was not the case, for the converts were just fattening on the truth. They

had been converted to the truth and when it was more clearly brought out it fed them. On Sunday morning after one of his searching sermons Brother Ellison said, "If there are any of you who are spoiled for the world and wish to join us, you may stand here in this little space by the stove, and there were thirty-five who arose, nearly all of whom were heads of families. Brother and Sister Pettis from my circuit were present, and they and my wife sat and wept for joy. In two weeks from that day ten more united with the class, making in all forty-five. This was the result of a seven weeks' meeting. To God be all the glory. Amen! It was in this meeting that Frankie Davis, now Durfee, was converted. She was a clear specimen of what grace can do. I went back to my circuit after an absence of seven weeks, and found all doing well. I had made arrangements for the appointments to be filled during my absence.

I now purchased a grammar and tried to bring up my studies as required by the conference, but I was not able to retain anything, and could not unlock the grammar. My head would ache and even the chairs seemed to get tired. I would run out and make some calls, get blessed and go at it again, but it was of no use.

The circuit had one hundred dollars raised for a parsonage, and I went to Richfield Centre and purchased a house and lot. The house was in bad condition and needed repairing, and we were not able to get it finished in time for conference. That fall,

the fall of 1872, conference returned me to the Flint and Forest circuit so I could complete the work. I also built a barn and made other improvements. This same fall I was received into the Michigan annual conference in full connection.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE Gaines work had been cared for during the spring and summer of 1872 by Brother C. A. Cusick, but that fall Brother G. A. Olmstead was sent to that circuit as their preacher. The next year I was sent to the Gaines circuit. I did not see much accomplished during the year except the building of a parsonage. I did much of the work myself. I can see many mistakes and failures that I have made. If all were written on my forehead, they would cause me many times to pull my cap down over my eyes, but in the midst of them all God and the people have borne with me. I shall never forget the kindness of a Sister A., a widow who took us into her chamber to live, and when we were holding protracted meetings she would often prepare our meals, and show us kindness in many ways. The Lord will reward her.

While we were on the Gaines circuit our son Lewis died in Ionia county, Michigan. He was twenty-three years of age and left a wife and two small children. While he was sick he thanked me for being so strict with him while young, and told me to hold the lines on the other boys as I had on him.

While raising up the Gaines work, a year or two before this, a man asked me to go to his home, a distance of four miles. I said, "Drive on, I will follow you." He took a young woman home with them, and when we were introduced I asked her if she enjoyed religion. She said that if I had asked her if she belonged to the church, she could have said yes, but that she did not enjoy religion. She had enjoyed the favor of God in the past, but did not at that time. I urged her to immediately seek God with all her heart. She said there was much to be considered about such an important matter; and she looked as though she would sink through the floor. I said, "There is much at stake, it is heaven or hell with you." I did not know that she was a fashionable dressmaker, and that she was advertising her trade by putting all the style she could upon herself. She had been truly converted in the M. E. church, and at that time dressed plainly, and carried out the religion she professed and was really happy in God. But the M. E. church members told her that she need not try to put old heads on young shoulders, but to just dress up and be somebody. She took the bait thinking that they were much older than she was and that they ought to know better than she did. Then she took the crooked path system and now she was enduring religion instead of enjoying it as thousands of others are doing; honest souls they are too, and not hypocrites, but deceived. Oh, what an account preachers and church members will have to give at the

judgment day. She settled up accounts with God, and at eleven o'clock that night we knelt in prayer; about three in the morning she was converted. Then she stripped for the race and went to advertising for the meek and lowly Jesus. She still worked at her trade, but advised her customers to have their dresses made plain. Now when I was sent to the Gaines circuit and became her pastor, I visited her and asked her how she was getting along. She replied that she was not getting along very well and said she saw she ought to have what I called holiness. I urged her to attend our camp-meeting. She looked at her shop and business, and said, "I will if God opens up the way." She went, and at the meeting she sought for a clean heart. The struggle was great. Some urged her to give up all for the Lord and then just believe. They assured her that it was very easy, but as she moved her head from one side to the other, she cried out, "I am dying," and the big tears rolled down her cheeks. Her dressmaking came up before her, and if she gave it up she did not know but that she would be forced to go into the kitchen as a dishwasher, but she signed the blank for God to fill out. All that she had or ever expected to have she deeded over to God in an everlasting covenant. She had now reached the place where she could pray from her heart, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth [in my heart] as it is done in heaven;" then down came the glory. I do not know that she leaped about, but I have seen her leap for joy many times since with her face

all radiant with glory. She went to work for her sister and her sister's husband, who were both unsaved people, her brother-in-law being a Universalist. She was eight miles from our meetings and could not attend them very often. She took the *Free Methodist* and read her Bible and held on to the Lord, sometimes with a trembling hand and sometimes in the midst of great persecution. When she had been sufficiently tried, the Lord released her and opened up the way before her. She afterwards went to visit her brother-in-law on his dying bed and asked him how his Universalism held out. He said, "Not at all." She said, "Your friends say you are going to die like a man." He replied, "That will do to talk when they are well, but I am a dying man." "Well, what do you want?" He replied, "I want the religion you had that summer when you worked for us." Glory be to God! It pays to live religion on to people, we cannot talk it on them, but our lives will tell, always. She would often throw away her confidence, and at our public gatherings would go forward. The last time I saw her do so was at a conference at St. Johns, Michigan. The altar was full. I went to her and asked her what she had come forward for. She said that she had lost her power. I asked her what she had done to lose it. Said I, "Have you been stealing?" She said, "Why, Brother Sage, do you think I would steal?" "Have you been quarreling with your mistress?" "Why, no, do you think I would do that?" "Then," said I, "do you see that poor sinner kneel-

ing out there alone? You have crowded her away from the altar. You go and help her find Jesus." She said, "I have no strength;" but she went and forgot herself, and when the sinner was converted, Frankie leaped and praised God. She became established and was afterwards for a short time one of our most efficient laborers in Canada. We must not get discouraged with honest souls.

About this time W. R. Cusick was at Ovid attending a camp-meeting, and asked me to go with him to Owatonna, Minnesota, to a camp-meeting. He raised the money to pay my expenses, and I went with him. The pilgrims gathered from all quarters. Some of the young people shook hands and shouted wonderfully. I looked at them with amazement. Brother Cusick said, "Hold on, Brother Sage, we will see them forward for prayers before the meeting closes," and sure enough we did.

Brother Cusick had spiritual discernment and could read people. One day when there was a large crowd he asked me to sing, and he began shouting at the top of his voice, "Look for the power; hold on to God;" and sure enough the power came; six or eight fell like dead men, and Brother Cusick himself among the number. He fell like a log by my side. One man thought it was getting a little too hot for him, and he took his wife in his arms and carried her off as a cat would her kitten. We had a glorious time and many were the slain of the Lord. Brother Cusick traveled all over that country and up into North Dakota, as chairman. He was a regular

breaking plow, and God endorsed him. At one time he said to me, "You and I will have to labor together." I said, "I cannot hold a candle to you." But he thought we would work well together. He said he could "break their legs" and I could "splinter them up." Well, I am glad I was ever permitted to get acquainted with him. He was surely a diamond in the rough.

At different times when I went to conference I was examined in my studies, and a number of years passed, but I could not bring them up, and as souls were convicted and converted and sanctified under my labors, the conference concluded to pass me. Since that time I have been placed in many difficult and embarrassing places, and have seen and felt my need of an education; but God and the dear people have borne with me, and none have suffered half as much as I have over my deficiency on that line. I would say to the boys who are deficient, master your studies. If you are not too advanced in years, you can do it by the help of God. Put in as much energy and time as business men do at their business and you will succeed and will not be obliged to neglect your circuit either. Keep filled with the Spirit; never be idly or triflingly employed. If you will be systematic, it is wonderful what you can accomplish for God. Some of our most learned and useful men have acquired their education while in pursuit of their calling, and some of them while traveling a circuit. May the Lord give us all the go-through spirit.

CHAPTER IX.

IN THE fall of 1874 I was sent to the Richmond and Ray circuit, then called the Macomb circuit. Rev. E. Leonardson had been the preacher the year before. He had an appointment two or three miles northeast of Memphis. After I got on to the circuit I took a brother Beech with me and went up there. It was a dark, cloudy night. Not far from the schoolhouse we met a man with a lantern. I asked him if there was to be a meeting that night. He said, "Yes, but there is no one there and I came away." I asked him to return with me and we talked about the state of things and had a prayer-meeting on the door-step. I left another appointment for a week from that night. When the day came I drove up and visited ten or twelve families, and prayed with them and in the evening we had a few out. I told them if any one would keep my wife and child and horse and myself for a week, I would come and hold a protracted meeting. The old man who had come with the lantern the first night said he would keep us a fortnight. It was the smallest house in which I had ever held meetings, and I asked them if they would put in more seats. They said they would when those were filled. I went from house

to house visiting ten or twelve families a day and talked and prayed with the people. I would pray in secret for the Lord to help me, and then go out and do all that came to my hand to do. I visited every family for miles each way. The old lady where we stayed would look at me and say to herself, "That man will never set the river on fire with his insignificant appearance and qualifications," and I suppose many more thought the same, but God could do all things, and by his power the work moved forward. I went around the walls tooting my little ram's horn, but there was no shouting yet, for the time had not come to shout.

The schoolhouse was soon filled, and some began to seek the Lord. Among them was a young woman whom I had met while visiting. She sought earnestly for three nights. The third night I knelt by her side and asked her if she was determined to have religion. She replied that she was. Then I told her to go home and read a certain chapter in Timothy and Peter, and the third chapter of Isaiah. I told her that if she would promise God to be a Bible Christian, I thought she would get saved at once. There had been but little said on the dress question. When she came to the meeting the next afternoon she said that she went home the night before and knelt down with her Bible in her hand and read three chapters and settled it that she would be a Bible Christian, and God forgave all her sins and blessed her in a wonderful manner, and she was happy all the forenoon; but when she started for meeting, the bless-

ing had left her, and now she was miserable. She asked us to pray for her, for she said she could not live in that way. She cried and prayed and struggled, but all to no purpose. I knelt by her side and said, "Now, the place to look for a thing is where we lose it." She said, "Mr. Sage, when I put this hat on my head it was so heavy, I could hardly hold my head up. She then took her hat off and laid it on the seat and prayed again, but received no help. Then a woman wearing a large fashionable hat came and said, "You have cast away your confidence, just believe and you will be all right." I said, "This girl has disobeyed the Lord." The girl then put her fingers into her hair and pulled out a lot of false hair and said, "Now, Jesus, I will make all my clothing plain, and forsake everything wrong, and be a real Christian." Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon her and she shouted and praised God. "Oh," said she, "how much better are the Lord's ways than are our ways. I had just bought sixteen yards of cloth for a dress, and was going to pay a woman three dollars to cut and make it, and now ten yards will make me a good dress and I can make it myself, and have six yards left to make my little sister a dress." Her little sister then began to rejoice because she was to have a dress from her sister's pattern. The battle was fought, and the victory gained on the dress question. It has to be fought out in all new places where the real work of God goes forward.

The neighborhood was filled with church members and they could pitch quoits, run foot races and

attend all the festivals of all kinds. Of course, I knew nothing about this, but God did, and he loaded the old gospel gun and I fired away until it seemed to me they were pounded to a pomice. I would take a text for sinners, but would unload on sinners in the church. One woman whom I visited thanked me with tears in her eyes for coming to her house and neighborhood to labor. But when she came to the meeting the truth hit her, and she went home angry saying that I was the most self-righteous old man that she ever saw. But the third night she went forward for prayers and was converted. There was a young woman by the name of Jane Stevenson assisting in the meetings who was very stirring and energetic—a regular “daughter of thunder.” In that community there lived an old man whom a number of us had tried to get into the gospel net, but without success. One day as Sister Stevenson was visiting from house to house, she met this old man and talked with him and all of the family personally, and prayed with them. The old man then hurried on to the next house and when Sister Stevenson in her visiting, came there, she recognized him, and remarked that she had met him before. She prayed again, and again he went on to the next house and she met him the third time. The next day he came to the afternoon prayer-meeting and arose and said, “Is there any help for me, an old sinner seventy-five years old, steeped in liquor and tobacco and sin of every kind? Yesterday,” he continued, “I heard a young woman pray three times,

and her prayers rang in my ears all night." I said, "Yes, there is help for you." He fell on his knees and in a short time was gloriously saved. A few days after this he went home to Jesus. Another old man who was a Scotchman was also converted through this girl's labors in that meeting. The revival continued in power and at the end of four weeks I opened the church doors and forty-eight united with us, for which we praised the Lord.

I now sent an appointment to another school-house three miles away, and when I went the house was filled with people. After preaching I asked how many who were present enjoyed religion, and three arose. I said, "There is some good timber here to make Christians out of, and I would like to come and work it up," and every hand was raised for me to come. I began by visiting from house to house and preaching nights. I was led altogether differently in my preaching, than I was at the other meeting, even when I preached on the same subjects, and some of those who had attended the meeting said I had toned down, but I had not. I find that we need to keep our gospel gun limbered up so that God can turn it any way to suit the occasion. He knows just how to take sinners under the fifth rib. God came to my help and in three or four weeks we raised up a class of thirty-eight, as good as they will average anywhere. Some of the hardest cases were converted, and they stand to-day. Praise the Lord!

To show you a specimen of the work done in these revivals I will just speak of one man by the

name of Cook. Before he was converted he was the most vicious, wicked man to be found. After he was converted he came into one of the afternoon meetings and said he knew that he was saved. He had been enabled to endure the trials which had come upon him. Said he, "I went out to feed my horses before I came to meeting, and I could not find the key. I went to the house and got the hammer, and in trying to pull the staple I broke the hammer handle. Before this I would have gone and got the ax, and split the door down, but I just said, 'Praise the Lord!' and then asked Him to help me to find the key, and he did." Another day he came and said he knew he had been converted for before coming to the meeting he went down to the river to get two pails of water, and on coming up the bank he slipped down and filled his boots and mittens full of water. Before he was converted he said he would have thrown the pails as far as he could, and then have run and jumped on them and smashed them, but now he only said, "Praise the Lord!" and went back and filled his pails. His face was all radiant with glory as he talked. That was about twenty-eight years ago, and he is the same happy man to-day.

A man came to me one day who lived about four miles north of this schoolhouse, and wanted me to go to his place and hold meetings. He was a great sinner and said he did not know of any one there who would entertain me, as there were but one or two who professed religion, but he said he lived in a

log house just across the road from the schoolhouse, and if I could put up with his accommodations, I would be welcome. I sent an appointment and went. He was soon so convicted that he would hold meetings in his sleep and would wake us up with his music. The next Sunday night he and his wife were both saved. The next day he went to see a sister to whom he had not spoken for years. Some time before this, when he was very sick, she had come to see him, but he would not speak to her, and she went away crying. She lived several miles distant, and the roads were very bad, but he saddled his horse and made the journey. When his sister came to the door, she was frightened. But he said, "You need not be afraid of me. The lion is turned into a lamb." He asked her and her husband's forgiveness and went home rejoicing. He both smoked and chewed tobacco, and drank liquor, but the Lord cleaned him all up, and held him up as a specimen of his power to save. Quite a number were converted during the meeting, and a class of fifteen was organized. That made about one hundred for the winter. In the spring I baptized forty-nine, all but one being baptized by immersion. The converts did well and a few more were converted, so I safely reported one hundred who joined that year. All praise to God who can use such humble means.

CHAPTER X.

THE fall of 1875 the conference returned me to the Richmond and Ray circuit, a certain brother was sent as my assistant, but he proved to be more of a detriment than a help. While I was attending conference, school meetings were held and we were turned out of two schoolhouses. Subscriptions had also been taken for a union church. I saw that would not do and circulated a subscription for a Free Methodist church. Nearly all who had subscribed for the union church gave the same amount to our church, and we began to build at once. We had only fairly started when I received a telegram from Spring Arbor, Michigan, that my son, Leslie, was very sick. I had built a small house at Spring Arbor, and three of my boys were attending the seminary at that place, and my wife was with them. Leslie was sick with the typhoid fever, and was delirious. I sat by his bedside all that I was able to, night and day, for over two weeks. We had a counsel of doctors, but they said that all had been done for him that could be done, and that he must die. I could have been comforted but Leslie was a backslider. Two weeks before he was taken sick he came home from meeting weeping, and said that if

Professor Jones had given him a chance he would have gone forward for prayers; and he did not have another chance before he was taken sick. He was delirious until he was struck with death, and then, poor boy, he could not speak. The professor and teachers and seventy scholars came to see him. We had to leave him with God. He was buried at Spring Arbor.

I made my way back to my work with a heavy heart, and found them pushing the work on the church building. It was soon completed and was dedicated in early winter. Towards spring I went to Ray and held a protracted meeting. A good class was raised up, and we built a church there. We also built a church and sheds in the Blinn neighborhood, I had a little money of my own and as my wife's health was poor, I bought twenty acres of land near the first church that we built, and built a house and barn for myself. It was completed and paid for before conference. I worked very hard during the year, and sometimes we would have from six to fifteen men at work at a time, for all had a mind to work.

The fall of 1876 the North Michigan conference was organized and my appointment was in the bounds of this conference. I went to conference free as a bird and told the Lord I was ready for any field of labor. When the appointments were read, the last one was, "Canada, C. H. Sage." When I received the blessing of holiness I just signed the blank, and asked God to fill it out. I had turned my life over

into the hands of God and asked him to do with me as seemed good to him, and I was to say yes, to God's will, but it seemed to me that this would crush me. As soon as I could I said to Brother Roberts, the president of our conference, "You have educated and talented men in the east, why did you not send one of them instead of such an ignorant man as I am?" He looked at me so fatherly, and said, "Brother Sage, we have got the educated and talented men, but they have not got the missionary fire, You will have to go." Before that time I had not felt clear about locating my wife, but now she had a home of her own choosing, and she and little Frankie could stay by the stuff, near a good church and school, and I could go out to the work and war, and we could divide the spoil. I had used up all of my means, buying and building, but I went home and began making preparations to go.

The first place I reached in Canada was Galt. Here I found that a Sister Smith had raised up a small class which seemed to be doing well. I did what I could for them and then went to Ellesmere, thirteen miles north of Toronto, and here I found Robert Loveless who was an Israelite indeed in whom there was no guile. He made no great pretensions, and was just a humble, quiet, God fearing man, but his home, his property, his soul and body were a living sacrifice to God and his cause. His companion was a humble, quiet godly woman, caring for all of the saints as they came as she would have cared for the Master. Brother Loveless was a mem-

ber of the Primitive Methodist church, but he read the *Earnest Christian* and this led him to write to Rev. B. T. Roberts. Brother Roberts came and preached at Ellesmere and also at Stouffville, a village fourteen miles north of Ellesmere, before I went there. Brother Loveless had secured a building in which we could hold meetings. I got out some advertisements saying that a live Yankee would hold meetings in a certain place, and stuck them up around the country. I could not have done a worse thing. I did not know why they thought so little of us, then, but I found out afterwards. I labored in that vicinity some time, but with little or no success.

Towards spring I became discouraged, and wrote to my chairman, Rev. John Ellison, that I desired to return to Michigan. He wrote me that if I could not do anything there to come back, that he had a circuit for me; so I went back and supplied the Goodland circuit the rest of the year.

Much to my surprise the conference held the next fall, 1877, returned me to Canada, as chairman. By this time Brother Loveless had bought a church at Stouffville. I went there and held some meetings, and met a man who had been saved among our people in the east, but who had fallen in with the doctrine of soul-sleeping, He argued it long and loud in his shop. I asked him if that doctrine had ever helped him to get a soul converted, and he admitted that it had not. I then asked him why he held to it. He said he thought God's word taught

it and that he could not renounce it at present. I took him by the hand and said, "Now, if you will lay this on the shelf and never mention it, we will go to work together for souls;" and to this he agreed. The meetings went well. The house was filled and conviction came upon the people. A large number came forward, and among them were two of this man's daughters. Their repentance was hearty, and they were both converted. One of them went home and gathered up her novels and burned them. She had just ordered a set of jewelry, and she at once countermanded the order, as she had no desire for that now. The work was going well when two of our brethren thought that the Advent brother ought to renounce his soul-sleeping doctrine, and they began to pray and talk at him. I think that the time would have come when he would have thrown it all overboard, if the brethren had kept on laboring for souls. They meant well, but the Spirit was grieved, and there was but little accomplished, afterwards.

About this time I received a call to a place called Widder Station, now Thedford. We held meetings in a schoolhouse for two weeks, with large, attentive congregations. Conviction came upon the people, but no one would move. One day a man came to me and said, "You think it strange because the people do not move, but there was an old Yankee here a number of years ago, who held meetings and raised up quite a class. He then married a woman and got her property and at once crossed the line into

Michigan. Now the people are watching you with suspicion." After I learned this I told my congregation that I lived only twenty miles from Port Huron, and that as most of the people there were Canadians, they could inquire all about me. I told them I wanted them to watch me, and inquire about me, for if I was a good man, I would bear watching; if a rogue, I needed watching. When the time came for me to leave, I was five dollars out of pocket, and a much wiser man than when I went there. At another place where it was difficult to accomplish anything, a man told me that an old Yankee had been there and held meetings, and had raised up a class, but had gone into debt for a horse and buggy, and then had gone back to the states. At that time there was no law by which a man could be followed from Canada to the states. This explained why the people were so slow to move. I also found that the Canadians were naturally slower to move than the Yankees, but when they did move they meant business.

I soon received a call to go to London, Canada. I went and found a man who was very anxious for us to hold a meeting in that city. The next morning I went with him to church. It was a small church, and the minister preached well, and I thought perhaps they did not need my labors as much as they did at other places. In the evening the preacher asked me to preach and I did so, and quite a number came forward. They had a short season of prayer, and the preacher said that they

had given themselves to God and had better arise. But they were very loth to do so. One woman said that she had long desired to be saved, but that every time she had sought the Lord she had been taught to believe that she was all right. But she said she knew that she was not right and wanted to be saved. Her husband and others requested me to go down to their house and have prayer-meeting. We did so and the woman was converted. Then I saw the necessity of going there, and I planned to hold meetings in a private house. God moved on the hearts of the people and quite a number were seeking the Lord when I was obliged to leave, as I had other engagements. I left an incompetent man in charge of the work, and the interest went down. Because of this only a small class was raised up, and the work moved slowly. A prominent man there went away leaving debts unpaid, and that with other things has greatly injured and retarded the work in that place.

CHAPTER XI.

THE work at Galt and Ellesmere still moved on slowly. At the beginning Brother Loveless was the main stay of the entire Canada work. His religion was of a practical type and entered into his entire life. One incident will illustrate this. One day a man got stuck with a load of hay on a bad piece of road near his house and came to Brother Loveless for assistance. Brother Loveless said to him, "You look weary and your team is tired." He then asked the man to feed his team and have some dinner, and offered to send his team and pull the load up on the solid road. Brother Loveless sent his hired man with a team of very valuable colts, and when the load swayed back and forth the colts became frightened and started to run away; then the lines broke and away they went. The driver said, "There goes four hundred dollars all to smash." Brother Loveless just kneeled down and said, "Lord, those are your horses, you know they are; you must not let them hurt themselves." His faith took hold of God and the horses soon stopped and no harm was done, and the man went on his way rejoicing. Brother Loveless was the good Samaritan. The Lord give us more such men.

The next fall I went back to Thedford and held a few meetings in John Toole's house, and organized a class of four; there were two sisters living fifteen miles away by the name of Hagle, and a local preacher by the name of Shorter; and a man by the name of John Hilborn. Brother Shorter went to conference with me the next fall, at Coopersville, Michigan. This year I had put in all my time faithfully and had been home three or four times. I had been very saving, for I had only received about forty dollars for my family, and I had no missionary appropriation. Afterwards I was blamed for not training the people to give systematically, but if I had begun to talk money to them at that time, the work in this new field would, in my opinion, have been greatly retarded.

In 1878 I went to conference at Coopersville, Michigan, and was again appointed to Canada as chairman. The work was so far away from the North Michigan conference that we could not transport an elder, and so I was obliged to act as chairman and hold the quarterly meetings. George E. Shorter was sent to the Thedford charge, and D. D. Marston to Galt. When Brother Marston's name was read off, he dropped his head on the seat in front of him and cried like a child. I went to him and said, "Is it more than you bargained for?" He said, "The idea of sending a boy to Canada." But in due time he came to my house and we started. We each had a horse and buggy, and so we drove through. We went first to the home of the Sisters

Hagle. It had been raining and was very dark before we reached there, and the only way we could keep the road was by seeing the water in the ditches on each side. I could hear Brother Marston groan as he was driving behind me. I called to him and asked him if this was more than he bargained for. He replied that nothing was too hard for him to do or bear; "but," said he, "the idea of sending a boy to Canada!" When we reached the home of the Sisters Hagle we received a cordial welcome and had a good night's rest. The next day we went on to London and found the little class there alive. Brother Marston then went on to Galt and the Lord was with him.

About this time the work opened at Woodstock. A Doctor Brown, a dentist, together with his wife and daughter, had moved there from St. Johns, Michigan, and they made a home for us. Soon after this a German girl by the name of Nancy Shantz, asked me to preach at a private house. I did so and after I had preached she exhorted. She had not talked long before she stopped and said she could not say what she wanted to in English. I told her to speak in German, and she did so, speaking with great power. It was a good meeting. They were New Mennonites—a very good people and the nearest like the Free Methodists of any people I had ever met. I will speak more of this sister later.

I soon had a call to go to Hannon, six or eight miles from Hamilton, on the mountain. At Hannon I found some who had been awakened and two or

three who had been saved under the labors of a Brother Brown, a Baptist. Here I also found some Fletchers and Wests who had lived near me in Michigan and had been at my house at the wedding of which I have already spoken. They had also attended other meetings and some of them had been at the Sabbath-schools which I had held in Michigan; and through these friends I was introduced in that part of the country, and the people were not as full of prejudice as they had been in other places. I went to work holding meetings in private houses evenings, and visiting and praying with the people days, and God came in power, and souls were converted on the old line. But the devil was determined to stop the work, and a report was circulated that I had stolen a whip. The brethren said it was too bad, and that I had better go and head it off, for it would injure the revival. They insisted on my going, and so for the first and last time I chased up one of the devil's lies, but I did not make anything of it.

The revival went on night and day. The meetings were held at different houses. The Lord very greatly convicted one wicked old man. He had been a sort of "stool pigeon." He would go forward at almost every revival meeting and join the church, but his religion would soon leave him. I followed him up and told him it was now or never with him. One afternoon I appointed a prayer-meeting at his house, but he did not seek the Lord. At the close of the meeting I said, "It is now or

never." After two sleigh-loads of us had started to leave, he said to Brother Andrew Wedge, who was assisting in the meeting, "They have gone and left me to be damned." At this he fell on the floor crying for mercy, and God met and saved him. Brother Wedge called to us, and we went back and found him happy in the Lord. The power of God so rested upon him that he could hardly stand alone. He said to me, "Oh, how happy I am; do you suppose it will kill me?" I said, "No, Brother Wright, it will not hurt you." Then he rode with us to his son's. On the way a young man passed us with a horse and cutter, and Brother Wright stopped him and said, "Go home and tell your father that Dad Wright is born again. Glory to God!" The young man stared at us and drove on. When we reached the home of his son, he met his daughter, a wicked, fashionable young woman. He ran to her and fell on his knees with his face in her lap and cried like a child. He said, "Maggie, you never saw your father like this before. You know what an ugly old man I have been, but I am born again. Glory to God!" That broke her heart and she was soon saved. The Canada people are great hands to go to market to sell their produce, and at the market Brother Wright met a lawyer on the street. It was about election time. He grasped the lawyer's hand, and said, "I am born again. Glory to God!" The lawyer said, "You act just as my father used to." Dad Wright had generally been lively about election time, and the lawyer said, "How is politics going up

your way?" He replied that he knew nothing about that now. At the restaurant that day he smelled brandy in the gravy on his pudding and he pushed the dish back, and said, "I am done with that stuff forever." He was thoroughly converted, and everything that pertained to the old, sinful life dropped off easily.

Such was the nature of the work done in our revival meetings. A class of thirty-two was raised up. They were "full-blooded" Free Methodists. I went to Galt to attend a quarterly meeting and met Sister Valtina Brown from Woodstock. I asked her to take charge of the work at Hannon, and I sent a young man by the name of T. P. Jarnagan. I could only visit them about once in three months. Calls were now coming in from different parts, and the work was taking root. Some who lived in the city of Toronto had become interested. A Brother Duncan, a dry-goods merchant there, was given to hospitality, and we frequently stopped at his home when we passed that way. Here I became acquainted with the Salvation Army for the first time. There were at that time some grandly saved souls among them. About this time our work was started at Uxbridge, a town northeast of Toronto, and some good work was done. During the year quite a work was accomplished at Thedford. Sister M. J. Hagle rendered some assistance to Brother Shorter. They purchased a cooper shop and made a church of the lower part and a parsonage of the upper story. Quite a class was raised up, and some work was done

where Sister Hagle's father lived on the main road between Sarnia and London, and at a quarterly meeting held there, the two Sisters Hagle and John Toole experienced the blessing of holiness. * A class was also raised up at a place called Jericho. Among those who united with this class was Mary Toole, John Toole's daughter, a girl eleven years of age. She is now in the field laboring as Mrs. Eli Clink. But the year soon rolled around and again we prepared for conference.

CHAPTER XII.

AT THE conference in the fall of 1879 I was again returned to Canada as chairman. The appointments read as follows: Thedford, J. H. Winters; Iona, William McKay; London, G. Shorter; Woodstock, A. Sims; Galt, J. Craig; Hannon, C. M. Smith; Ellesmere, T. Carveth; Stouffville, to be supplied; Gananoque, W. McKearnin; Muskoka Mission, G. D. Marks. We all went to the fields to which we had been appointed, and had success in the work. The calls for help came in faster than we could get men to fill the places. A man and his wife by the name of Fletcher moved from Hannon to Bracebridge, a town in the Muskoka district, and were calling for help, but there was no one to go. Early in the winter at a quarterly meeting at Galt, I placed this call before the official board, and as there was no one to send, they said that I must go. It was one hundred and twenty-four miles north of Toronto, and the expenses were high both on the railroads and on the stage. When I started I had but nineteen days to stay. An appointment had been announced in a schoolhouse in the country three miles from Bracebridge. The snow was four feet deep on the level, but it was not drifted, and the

wind did not blow. The people were poor and the preacher in the village was supported mainly by the missionary board. He had gone out and preached occasionally in the schoolhouse, but had never visited the people. When I visited them and talked with them about their souls and prayed with them, it took hold of them. I told Jesus I had but little time to stay, and He must help me, and I would do my best. It was not long before the house was filled and when I would give an invitation, the rostrum that ran across the schoolroom would be full before I could sing one verse. I had but little assistance at the altar. One night they were all very much in earnest for salvation, and all I could do was to go from one end of the rostrum to the other encouraging them to be thorough and to continue seeking until they were truly converted. The devil was constantly saying, "You have preached hell and damnation so strong that they are going crazy, just look at their eyes." I told the devil in short meter that I had preached God's word, and that the Lord was responsible for results. All at once a large, tall young man sprang to his feet and said, "I have been the wickedest boy in Muskoka, and I am saved, glory to God!" I then asked him to explain to the seekers how he had been converted. The seekers were weeping and wringing their hands and praying with great earnestness. This young man began to talk and in a short time a shout went up all along the line. I asked how many knew they were saved, and fourteen arose and said, one after another, "I

am saved. Praise the Lord!" The ice was broken, and the work went on in power.

I saw that a class was going to be raised up, and began to pray the Lord to send me some one to take charge of it. Just then I received two letters—one from Sister Valtina Brown of Woodstock, saying that she felt led to offer herself for the Lord's work, and one from Sister M. J. Hagle, who was at London assisting Brother Shorter. I arranged for both of them to come, but Sister Hagle failed us and Sister Brown came alone. She reached Bracebridge just in time to take the work before I left. This is where I first became acquainted with Brother and Sister Haley. They lived five miles farther out over the rocks and crossways, and corduroy bridges. It was their son, Rev. J. W. Haley, who recently went as a missionary to Africa.

This was the very worst country I had ever seen for the people to make a living. The government had taken all the valuable timber, and had left the pine stumps and rocks for the people to make farms of, and then had advertised that two hundred acres of land would be given free to settlers. The people had come from far and near to secure homes and had found a country of rocks and summer frosts. The only way many could live was to peel tan bark in the spring, and go to the front to work in the summer, and then come back to the lumber camps in the winter. I never before felt so sorry for any one as I did for these people, and I had never seen any so ready to embrace the gospel in all its simplicity.

I formed a class of thirty-two who were really saved, and left Sister Brown to care for them.

I soon met Sister Hagle who saw her mistake in not going and decided to join Sister Brown in the work. These were the first female laborers that were sent out. They soon had a circuit eight miles long, with three appointments. The roads were so bad that it was about as easy to go on foot as to ride, but the people received them so gladly and were so blest, that it was a pleasure to labor among them. The sisters succeeded in the work and several new classes were soon organized. Brother B. W. Jarnagan, a book agent, went there and canvassed for books, and helped to pay their expenses.

That year we held our first camp-meeting in Canada, at Hannon. We had no tabernacle. Rev. B. R. Jones was present, and the Lord wonderfully helped him to preach. Sisters Hagle and Brown and Sister Haley came from Muskoka to attend the meeting. The Lord was present and souls were saved. At this camp-meeting an old gentleman who was a cousin of Sister Hagle was present. He had been so prejudiced against me and our work that he disdained us as the giant did David. I had advertised the camp-meeting, and the names of Sisters Hagle and Brown were on the bills; and as his mother's name was Hagle, his curiosity was aroused and he was anxious to learn whether this Hagle was related to him. This led him to come to the meeting, and on Sunday morning, as he drew near, the singing and shouting made him tremble. He was a

backslider. Frankie Davis Durfee was testifying just at this time, and the spirit of conviction struck him, and he never rested until he returned to his Father's house. Sister Haley had gone all through the meeting until Monday without finding peace. She had desired to go home, but on Monday at the love-feast Jesus met her, and said, "Peace be still," and she rejoiced in his forgiving love. The meeting closed well and left a good influence in that community.

Sisters Hagle and Brown went from that meeting to Ellesmere. They had been laboring among the poor and had given away some of their own clothing until their wardrobe was reduced. They went to the home of Brother Loveless. The next morning they each had a five dollar bill laid at their plate, and a horse and buggy was put at their disposal. Brother Loveless said he wanted them to visit and hold meetings and get souls saved, and that he would care for them temporally. A part of the time they held meetings in a tent, and a part of the time in a private house, the home of Brother Phœnix. The sisters were together for a short time, and then I sent Sister Hagle to Hannon, and she started the work at Grimsby.

The next time I went to Bracebridge the work was doing well, and we had a baptism in a little stream, on Brother Fred Leader's farm. At supper time Sister Leader said, "Fred, if any one had told us one year ago that we would have a baptismal service on our place, and that the elder would

eat supper at our house, we would have thought that the world was as likely to come to an end as that such a thing would occur; but here we are, praise the Lord." Truly the wilderness blossomed like the rose. It did me good to be in such a blessed spiritual atmosphere and see what God had wrought.

But the years of prosperity and victory we had had in Canada were not without many trials and discouragements. Some who had called themselves Free Methodists had turned out to be imposters and had disgraced the church, and in some places had nearly ruined the work. One minister had been guilty of gross immorality, and others had stepped aside from following the Spirit and were following the flesh. These were dark days for me. One day I took my Bible and went into Dr. Brown's garret at Woodstock, and said, "Lord, if you desire me to go on with the work, you will have to encourage me." I opened my Bible and my eyes fell on the place where David was in a strait place and there came to his help day by day, captains of hundreds and captains of thousands, until it was a great army like the hosts of God. I took courage and went forward with a trembling hand.

Sister Lutz and her daughter had moved to Gananoque, and her son-in-law, Brother Willie Paterson, called for help. I went and found a blessed home. Some souls were saved and a small class formed, and so the work spread. The conference year had been quite prosperous, considering all things.

CHAPTER XIII.

JUST before conference, Robert Beedle, of Iona, sent for me. I found the Wesleyan preacher at that place holding meetings. Brother Beedle and I attended the meeting. I just reported to the Lord for duty, and the minister asked me to preach. I did so and one wicked man was converted. Then I sent Sisters Hagle and Davis to help Brother McKay in a revival he was holding.

Brother McKay's father lived near Southwold Station, and I held a quarterly meeting there. I went a little early in the week so as to look around and spy out the country. The first evening I was there I went with a wagon load of people to a protracted meeting held by a local preacher of the M. E. church. He asked me to preach and I did so. The Spirit of the Lord assisted and we had a good meeting.

Late on Saturday night Grandma McKay and some others came to me and said that the M. E. circuit preacher had come and reported that I was an old Mormon and had nine wives, and that two of them were at Iona. I said, "Never mind, the devil is just ringing the bell; we will have a good congregation to-morrow, and the Lord will take care of the

whole matter. Go to bed and don't lose any sleep over this." The next morning the house was crowded. Brother and Sister Beedle, and Sisters Hagle and Davis came. We had a good meeting. I preached and the sisters both exhorted in the Spirit, and all the prejudice was gone like a June frost.

Soon after this Brother McKay came and held a revival meeting in the hall at the station. I sent the sisters to assist him, and a large number were saved and a class raised up.

Once when I went to hold a quarterly meeting for Sister Hagle she said that she came to a place where the Bible seemed closed to her except two verses, and she hardly knew what to do; but she took them as a text and the Lord helped her. When I persuaded the sisters to enter the work I told them particularly that they need not try to preach. I told them to take their Bibles and read a chapter and explain it as best they could, and then call on the people and pray with them, and thus in a simple way carry them the gospel message. If I had set them to preaching the first thing they would have made a failure, but in due time the Lord himself was setting them at it in His own way. Sometimes we depend altogether too much on the preaching and but little is accomplished. God help us to humble ourselves so we will be ready to go into the kitchens, or out on the farms where the people live, for by so doing we will be sure to reach them. These sisters had only their Bibles and hymn-books. They went

out into the streets and lanes, and prayed with the people and urged them to come to Christ. They went forth weeping, bearing precious seed and souls were saved through these means.

Two boys had been sent to Bracebridge; one of them stayed a day or two, and the other a week or two. They did not have the backbone for such fare and labor. Sister Brown began meetings in the house of Brother Phoenix not far from Armadale. Soon after this I sent Sister Eddy, of Grand Ledge, Michigan, to assist her, and I soon followed to hold a quarterly meeting for them. At the close of the first evening service I said, "Brother Phoenix has enough to care for, and if there is any one in the neighborhood who will keep me, I will go with him, even if he is the biggest sinner in the place." A man came to me and said that he was the biggest sinner there, and asked me to go with him. I did so and found a good, comfortable home, and some members of his family were converted. The meetings went well and were finally moved to a large, vacant church, and one of our best circuits was raised up. A church was soon built. Brother Loveless invested largely and did much of the work. Sisters Hagle and Davis were doing well at Hannon and Grimsby, and souls were being saved.

Before this Brother A. Sims had joined us, and had gone to a mill, near Kelvin, and had held a very successful revival meeting. During this meeting Sister Sipprell was raised up from a sick bed. The Lord told her He would give her strength to labor

for Him. She obeyed the call and has been in the work ever since. Thus the Kelvin work was raised up.

In June of this year Sisters Hagle and Eddy were sent to assist Brother George Coates who was holding revival services. Sister Eddy went home and left Sister Hagle alone, but the revival went on and quite a number were saved. Among those converted at this time were Brother Thomas Moorehouse and wife, and some of his family; Henry Stevens and wife; and Brother and Sister Demill. About this time Sister Hagle went to Onsley to hold meetings, and I sent Sister Thomas to assist her. Sister Thomas had been converted in the meeting held at Kelvin by Brother Sims. Quite a class had been raised up at Kelvin, and they began to build a church. At Onsley a class of some nineteen was formed.

We had another camp-meeting this summer at Hannon. Rev. G. W. Coleman and Rev. W. F. Manley were present. God came in power, and many were the slain of the Lord. Sister Nancy Shantz was at this meeting and received the blessing of holiness, and quite a number of New Mennonites were there also. Their preacher, Brother Bowman, as well as his members, were very much blessed of the Lord. Sisters Mary Loveless and Maggie Wright lost their strength and lay for some hours. A woman was there from Niagara Falls who had ridiculed those who had been slain, but the Spirit of God took hold of her and she was made a spectacle before all

eyes. She fell to the ground, and like the child in the scriptures, she wallowed foaming, but when she yielded up to God she came through shouting His praises. A large, stout, intelligent man said that it was only the weak-minded ones who were exercised in that way, but he was soon powerfully convicted and lost his strength and lay for some time. One day Sister Sipprell was rather perplexed over the manifestations, and the Spirit struck her and she screamed and danced before the Lord. Brother Manley said, "Pretty well done for a Quakeress." The meeting continued in harmony. Brother Manley was a Canadian and was wonderfully well received among the people. One night a great crowd had gathered and there was much confusion and traveling about. Brother Manley arose and said, "Hear the word of the Lord," and then read a chapter, and an awe settled down upon the people, and they were soon seated and listened with breathless attention. Brother Coleman held forth the truth in a wonderful manner, and God endorsed it with his presence and power. Sister Nancy Shantz said she was called of God to labor, and wished to join us, but I told her she had better labor among the Mennonites, as they were German and she could not speak good English. She said they would not permit women to labor. I went to their conference and told them about it, but they said they could not put women ahead, and so Sister Shantz joined our people.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE Canada conference was organized October 21-23, 1880, in the Free Methodist church at Galt, Ontario. General Superintendent B. T. Roberts presided, and A. Sims was secretary. The preachers were C. H. Sage, J. Craig, T. Carveth, and A. Sims. The lay delegates were J. Carter, J. Wright, J. H. Winter, and J. Ballentine. C. M. Smith and J. H. Winter were received on trial, and William McKearnin remained on trial. C. H. Sage was elected chairman (or district elder).

The appointments were as follows: Grimsby, C. M. Smith; Hannon, A. C. Leonard, supply; Galt, J. H. Winter; Woodstock, A. J. Sims; London, M. Harrison, supply; Iona, J. Wright, supply; Florence, Misses Hagle and Thomas, supplies; Thedford, J. Craig; Ellesmere, J. A. Adams, supply; Stouffville, T. Carveth; Heswick, William McKearnin; Muskoka, D. Fletcher, supply; Gananoque, A. Alguire, supply.

There were 181 members in the conference in full connection and 143 probationers, making a total of 324. Quite a number of promising young men were called to the ministry, but would not go, so we were obliged to put the young women into the field.

In April of this year Sister Hagle's limb was broken and Frankie Davis supplied the work until conference. Sister Hagle was laid aside for a year. While Sister Brown was laboring at Ellesmere Sister Shantz came to assist her. One night after meeting she told Sister Brown that the people did not want to hear her for when she arose to speak they held their heads down. Accordingly she decided not to go the next night, but said she would stay at home and pray. She did so and Sister Brown said that she never before had such help from God as she did that night.

About this time a sister who had moved from near Uxbridge to Belhaven started some prayer-meetings in her house, and asked me to send some one to assist her. I sent Sister Shantz. There had been quite a stir there and a number of them began to testify, but the first sermon Sister Shantz preached silenced all their talk, and the man of the house was greatly stirred and told his wife that Sister Shantz could not stay there any longer. The sister told Sister Shantz the next morning, and she said, "The Lord has sent me here and I shall stay." There was no meeting until the next evening, and she went to visiting and was busy all day. At night she came to a piece of woods with a lane running back to a house. She knelt down and told the Lord if she was worthy, to give her a place to stay that night. If not she would come back and sleep in the woods; that she was no better than her Savior, and He had not where to lay His head. She went to the house and the

woman threw her arms around her neck and kissed her and kept her all night. The next day she spent visiting from house to house and that night the word began to take effect, and souls began to get saved. The work went on powerfully all that winter in that and another neighborhood, and at the end of two years Sister Shantz had two churches built and paid for, and a membership of over one hundred. It was called the Belhaven circuit.

The work moved steadily on. We had a camp-meeting that year at Armadale; a goodly number came over from New York State, and Edward Matthews came from Michigan. It was a good meeting and many souls were saved. One night the congregation was dismissed and the people did not disperse very readily and some one ordered the lights put out, and the people were left to grope their way in darkness. I ordered them relighted, and it was done. I told the people to quietly retire and come again early the next morning and stay all day, and they would probably see some wonderful manifestations, for God would surely bless His people during the day. They all left orderly and quietly. At another time when the saints were blest the people stood upon seats, and we tried in vain to get them seated. I finally said, "You are all anxious to see the people when they are moved upon by the Spirit. Please sit down and give every one an opportunity to see," and they at once complied with my request. The Lord blessed the saints in a wonderful manner. They testified and exhorted, and the people were held

spell-bound. This meeting told for God, and full salvation was advertised in that place. The Lord gave Sister Warren, who is now Mrs. G. W. Coleman, running orders. She went back and forth across the ground in front of the stand and would often stop and give a powerful exhortation. This meeting left its mark there for the truth.

That year or the next we had a camp-meeting near Bracebridge, and Willie Olmstead attended. Such meetings were entirely new to the people in that location and much good was accomplished. One night after meeting I said, "Willie, I want you to lead the love-feast in the morning." He said, "I have been to many of them, but never took charge of one, tell me how and I will do the best I can." I gave him the outlines and the next morning he was on hand and the Lord wonderfully helped him. We had a good time. At another time I called upon him to preach and he did well. Again he took charge of the love-feast. He came on the stand and at the proper time he said, "Hear the word of the Lord," and repeated a chapter. I saw the making of a useful man in him if he kept humble. Afterwards at a camp-meeting at Florence, while preaching, he said that his father wrote him not to go thundering through and kill himself, that it was the lightning that killed and not thunder, and he said he wrote back to his father that heat lightning never killed, but it was the lightning with the thunder that killed. At this camp-meeting there were a goodly number from Michigan. Brother M. DeVoist,

Brother D. D. Marston, Perry Miller's wife and a Sister Mains and others. They all labored efficiently for the Master and souls were saved. That is the way it should be at all our general meetings.

This year was a busy year with us all, especially with me. I had nineteen places in which to hold quarterly meetings, and each quarter it was necessary to hold several of them during the week. I had appointments nearly every night in the year, besides the care of all the work and laborers. They wrote to me often. I wrote hundreds of letters on the cars and while waiting at stations. I used to go home about once in three months and would work myself nearly sick helping my wife and Frankie get the home affairs in shape so they could get along during my absence. One day when I was on the train I was so weary that I fell asleep. When we arrived at Port Huron the brakeman shook me and said, "Wake up here, the boat will leave you." I jumped up, rubbed my eyes, and ran to the boat. Sometimes I would work so hard while at home that I would bring on the erysipelas and would go back to my work with my face swollen and my eyes red. One winter I had a hard cold and cough and could get nothing to relieve it. When I went home in February I trimmed my orchard and that made me worse. When I started from home I bled at the lungs and had to go to the car door often and empty my mouth of blood. A man said to me, "You are bad off." He said that many of his relatives had died of lung trouble and he was once taken with the same disease

and had expected to die; but he was cured by taking balsam of fir. I went to a drug store at Port Huron and purchased some and began taking it. I then went on and held my quarterly meetings and assisted about ten days in a protracted meeting. The Lord helped me and I was soon well. Praise His name!

The second annual session of the Canada conference was held at Hannon, Ontario, October 13-15, 1881. E. P. Hart was president and A. Sims, secretary. I was again elected chairman. There were 288 full members reported and 199 probationers, making a total of 487. This was a gain of 107 full members during the year. The report of the committee on the state of the work that fall was as follows:

“We are deeply grateful to God for the success he has vouchsafed unto us during the first year of our existence as a conference. On most of the circuits the converting work has moved forward, and believers have been established in the faith. Many new points have been opened up and classes formed. The great Head of the church has laid the work upon the hearts of several converts, and is thrusting them out into the great harvest field. The Lord has been pleased to bless with no little success the labors of our sister evangelists, and has made them “terrible as an army with banners.” Thus God is raising up laborers from among us to enter the open doors. Praise His name!

“Our camp-meetings and general gatherings have been seasons of special profit, and we bless God for an increase of many precious souls. Six new churches have been built during the year, and others are in contemplation. Fierce opposition, slander

and reproach have met us at every turn, from hireling priests and backslidden churches; but this has only tended to spread the truth and stir us up to greater effort.

"Sanballat and Gesham have frequently urged us to confer with them on the plain of Ono, but we are about a great work for God and cannot come down. Hallelujah! We find the need of much wisdom, common-sense, and, more than all, the power of the living God in raising up new circuits and building our converts in righteousness and true holiness. We are not large in numbers, but 'the best of all is God is with us,' and in the highest sense 'we be brethren.' Glory to Jesus! We do not intend to let party names and strife divide us, but, hand in hand, heart to heart, together present an unbroken front to the enemy. In the face of all opposing influences we expect, through the mighty God, to spread the news of this blessed salvation through this wide Dominion. We are not looking for storms, but for victory. We shall have it. Our God is leading the way and fighting our battles. Amen and amen!"

We had an excellent conference, and the blessing of the Lord came upon us in a wonderful manner.

CHAPTER XV.

WHEN we went to conference in the fall of 1882 I suggested to General Superintendent Roberts that the conference was so large that there ought to be another chairman elected. He thought that I had better continue to travel the entire work, but I told him there was too much responsibility upon me, and so he consented to my wish in the matter. The conference was held that fall in Waterloo township, Waterloo county, Ontario, September 20-23. James Craig and myself were elected traveling chairmen, and D. D. Marston was made a local chairman and appointed to Severn Bridge circuit and the Muskoka district. I will give a short report of the Canada work as taken from an article which was written by Brother Roberts and published in the *Earnest Christian* in October, 1882:

“The session of the Canada conference which has just closed was one of promise. There was much of the presence of God realized all through the session; the preaching services were occasions of deep interest. William Gould of the New York conference was present and preached at their urgent request every day. His labors were highly appreciated. There was such an indication of a revival that meetings were announced for the following week. The

reports from the circuits showed a generally prosperous condition. The work has every evidence of being deep, thorough and progressive. Two traveling chairmen instead of one, as heretofore, were elected. These were Rev. C. H. Sage and Rev. J. Craig. They are full of faith and courage. One peculiar feature of this conference is the large number of sisters employed in the work. Ten were sent out this year as supplies. Their appearance indicates deep piety, modesty, humility and intelligence. They were all neatly and plainly dressed in black and wore black straw hats, or bonnets with a plain black ribbon around them. They are generally successful, we are told. Brother Sage says that the young men whom God has called to the work generally refuse to go, so He has to send out the young women. 'This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; and it shall come to pass in the last days saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.'"

Brother Gould was especially helped while encouraging the faltering ones, or those who depreciated themselves, and Brother Roberts handled those who thought they were the only ones and who were always shooting at others—like the boy that had a half-day to hunt, who shot everything he came to whether it was a good bird or a bad one. That year Sister McGregor, from New York state, and Martha Thomas were sent to Gananoque, and the Lord helped them, and quite a work was done.

The work moved in Jesus' name all along the line. There was a camp-meeting held near Sutton, on the bank of Lake Simcoe. There were a number of Indians who came from an island near by. The

old chief stood and looked on for a day or two, and then told the Indians it was all right, to just go in and seek the Lord, and they did with all their might. They never stopped for dinner, and God came in power; some fell like dead men. Towards night an Indian girl asked me to baptize her by immersion, but the meeting at the altar ran so long that it became necessary to wait until the close of the night service. I then secured some extra garments of one of the tent-holders and we went out into the lake. It was not a dark night, and we had some of the lamps on the bank, so there was plenty of light. I waded out quite a distance, and the Indians went out on each side of us, with muffled oars. I have often wondered if I should meet her in glory. This ended a meeting never to be forgotten.

At two different times I baptized quite a number of converts for Sister Shantz in the lake. At one time the wind blew towards the shore, and the waves rolled high, and one woman was very large and some of the people feared that we would have trouble, but the Lord helped us through and everything passed off all right. At another time we had a baptism in Lake Ontario near Hannon. The lake was very rough, but God honored the ordinance. The saints shouted and one lost her strength and fell on the shore.

During the year there was some work done out near the St. Clair river in Sombra, and I held a quarterly meeting in a church near where the Charlemont circuit now is. I held a number of meetings

in a shop of a Mr. Holt on the River St. Clair, and many more at Brother Andrew Wedge's. Brother George Coates had charge of the work there and some were saved. Sister Thomas was there for a time. Out in Dawn, not far from Dresden, Sister Hagle held a few meetings while she was at home visiting her mother who was sick. In this meeting a Brother William Harvey was converted. He had formerly lived not far from the place where the prayer-meetings were held which resulted in the Charlemont circuit. Thus we see how some sow and others reap, but it will all sum up right at the judgment. Down here some of us will be credited with more than we deserve, while others will not receive the credit which is due them, but in the end all will come out right. When I started out I made up my mind to invest everything and go in with my might, and wait until the judgment day for a settlement.

I would have been glad to have attended the general conference which was held at Burlington, Ia., October 11, 1882, but I did not go for two reasons. In the first place I did not think myself capable of doing anything at such a gathering where there were so many learned and talented men. I had never felt myself capable of being a chairman (district elder), and when I would be introduced as a chairman I would feel like sinking out of sight. One brother told me once for my good, he thought, that I lived in my head and that I ought to move down into my heart. I took it all right, but it was counsel not needed. The Lord well knew that such

was not the case. Another reason for not going to the general conference was that Brother D. D. Marston had raised up an interest near Sheffield while he was on the Galt work, and I had been asked to go and hold a revival there. The hand of the Lord seemed to clearly lead me in this direction.

I went and started the revival meetings in private houses, as I could not get a church or a school-house in which to hold them. A Sister Stockwell had been saved while Brother Marston was there and her home made a hitching post to commence with. God soon came and the houses were filled to overflowing and souls began to be saved.

One day I saw a negro ploughing and I called and asked him where he lived. He said, "Up near Charlie Fisher's." I said, "There is a meeting at his house, and I want you to come." He said he had not been to meeting but twice in four years, and then he was made fun of and he had said he would not go again. I urged him to come and said that if they made sport of him I would take his part. I then tossed him an apple I had in my hand. He caught the apple and showed the white of his eyes, and thanked me for it. He and his wife came, but he sat back under the stairs. Charlie Fisher and his wife and Wesley Stockwell had been saved before this, and they and others testified, and we had a good time. After meeting I shook hands with the negro, and as he and his wife were going home he said, "Don't you think, the old man shook hands with me just as though I was somebody;" and she

said, "Mrs. Stockwell, that little angel, shook hands with me." He then said that if he thought they would hold meetings in a negro's shanty he would clean it up and seat it. She told him to ask Charlie Fisher, and he did so. Charlie said, "Yes, I know he will, for I heard him say he would go anywhere this side of hell, if he could get a soul saved." The meeting was appointed. Some were fearful and said the interest would go down now, as we were going to a negro's shanty, but we went and the colored man and his wife were both converted, and the interest kept rising.

The meetings were held for miles around. One day as I was visiting from house to house the people told me not to stop at a certain house. They said the man who lived there had formerly been a local preacher, but that he had gone to California and had backslidden, and was now a terrible drunkard. They thought that if I went there I would get nothing but abuse, but I went, trusting God to help me through. I found him in the house and introduced myself to him. He said, "Your calling is a good one, I used to preach, but I am gone now. Talk and pray as much as you like with my family, but it is no use for me. I must go to work at my oats." He was trying to light his pipe and was then somewhat under the influence of liquor. Although I hated tobacco I did not reprove him, but said, "Light your pipe and then sit down and I will sing to you." He did so and I sang, "How lost was my condition till Jesus made me whole." As I con-

tinued to sing he began to cry like a child. I said, "Let me read a little and pray a short prayer." He said, "Pray all you like and I will stay." He was all broken up and I could hardly get away from him. A few evenings afterwards he was reclaimed, and I went home with him. While I was holding the lantern for his boy to unharness the horses, he said to me, "I thank you for helping my father. He means business." His life afterwards proved the saying true.

The work was thorough and Brother Stockwell had quit using tobacco—he had both smoked and chewed. One day he met a local preacher and said, "I have got saved, praise God! Tobacco and all else is gone by the board." The preacher said, "Wesley, you have not quit altogether, have you?" He replied, "Yes, it is all gone." He said to him, "I'm afraid you will have a fit of sickness. You had better smoke a little and stop gradually." I was stopping at Brother Stockwell's some of the time and after I went to bed I thought I smelled tobacco smoke, and I said to his wife the next day, "Does Wesley smoke?" She said, "A little, and he is getting hurt over the testimonies. He thinks they are aimed at him when they tell what the Lord has done for them, and we shall have to be a little careful or I fear he will backslide over it." I thought, "well, I will be careful." That night as the people were filling the house, for all available space was being taken, I began to talk a little, and as I went on I said that it was natural for people to worship.

"Some," said I, "worship their farms, some their horses, and some their good looks;" and then before I thought of what I was saying I added, "and some think more of an old black pipe than they do of Jesus." This man seemed to jump in his seat, and the devil said to me, "Now you have killed him." But that night as some were lighting their pipes in the back room before starting out, they said, "Wesley, are you not going to light up?" And he said, "No, I am done with it forever," and in a short time after this he could not bear the smell of tobacco. Our God is almighty.

There are many things more that I might speak of which transpired during this meeting, but suffice it to say that a good, substantial class was raised up of over thirty members, and afterwards a church was built. While they were digging the sand for the plastering, the ground was frozen and Gabriel, the colored man spoken of before, who was their sweet singer, was killed by a frozen bank falling upon him. They mourned over him as much as they would have mourned over a white person. He may be a star in my crown of rejoicing, who knows?

CHAPTER XVI.

WHILE Sisters Warren and Huffman were at Severn Bridge they raised up a good class. They were both timid and I told them that if one faltered, the other must strike up and sing, "Hold on to the plough and weary not now." God helped them and Sister Warren (now Sister Coleman), was one of our most efficient workers in Canada. Afterwards Sister Huffman married one of her converts and soon left the active work.

About this time while Sisters Hagle and Davis were driving over their work, Sister Hagle was thrown out of the buggy and her limb near her hip was broken. Several physicians were called who said the limb was not broken, and she lay nine weeks before it was set. Then she lay eight weeks with sixteen pounds of sand attached to the limb, and during this time had typhoid fever. Sister Davis took care of her, and through her faithful care and the blessing of God, Sister Hagle was raised up again, but with one limb shorter than the other, so that she was maimed for life. The dear pilgrims sent her means to pay the doctor's bill and other expenses, and cared for her until she was on her feet again.

When Sister Hagle was again able to begin work

she was sent to the Iona circuit. Sister Eva Wicker was with her about six months, then I sent Martha Thomas to her assistance, and they began a revival at a place called Thames River, but the circuit is now called Middlemiss. The congregations were large and the interest was good. When I was there many were seeking, and two or three had been saved. The first night I preached a large number came to the altar, and more would have come, but I said, "Hold on, let us get this grist ground out first." I only had a short time to stay, and I wanted to see those who were seeking brought out in the clear light and on a firm basis before I left. There are many revivals reported telling of a large number that profess to be converted and how the whole country was stirred for miles around, while these same reports state that only a few joined the Free Methodist church. That was the case in this revival for only nineteen joined at its close. If we want the people saved we must put the plough down at the beginning, and get them spoiled for the world. A church was soon built on that work.

This year the devil followed me continually. The conference began to take on more of a system. The district records had to be examined, and the preachers and evangelists were required to bring up their studies. I was obliged to hobble along and do the business that devolved upon me, and many of the laborers could teach me my A B C's as far as book learning was concerned. It seemed as though I had said all that I knew over and over, until it was

stale, and I felt like a broom worn up to the handle. I therefore began to look for a new field of labor, and advised with some of our best and most experienced men about going south. I knew that in the south there were many poor and unlearned people and I thought I could reach them and raise up a work in that country. Those with whom I advised agreed with me in this, and so at the call of Brother B. W. Jarnagan I went to Chatanooga, Nashville and Tullahoma, Tennessee, and held a few meetings. I came back favorably impressed.

About this time we held a camp-meeting at Kelvin, Ontario, which was very good. Sister Sipprell went to London, and some good work was accomplished. A Brother and Sister Taylor took an active part. Brother Taylor furnished a little chapel, and it looked as though something might be done there for the Lord.

In the fall of 1883 the annual conference was held at Kelvin. I told the brethren that my intentions were to go south, and Brother A. Sims was elected chairman. We had a good conference and all went well. Up to that time I had never received any missionary appropriations, and I had never asked a committee to say what I ought to receive. I just did the best I could for the people and for the work, and took what they gave me, and my wife helped bring up the rear without any complaint. I did not stay to the Sunday evening meeting but went away to avoid bidding the dear laborers and people good-by.

CHAPTER XVII.

MY FRIENDS have often told me that I made a sad mistake in going south, and I now think it was one of the saddest mistakes of my life, and I have made many. Some people seem to think that they are always led of the Lord, and that they make no mistakes. But I am satisfied that the Lord has many things put upon him that he ought not to bear. While God does do much for us, he does not give us a perfect judgment, for we are liable to mistakes in this life. I am glad, however, that there will be no mistakes in heaven.

I went home from conference, and Brother VanMarter, myself and wife, went to Tullahoma, Tennessee. I soon saw that there was no stock taken in Northerners, and the most of the people would pay much more to support a dog and a gun than they would to support the gospel. I set about getting a home where my boy could support us. I bargained for a place about five miles west of Tullahoma and Brother VanMarter purchased one near by. My wife remained in Tennessee while Brother VanMarter and I went back to Michigan and disposed of our places and effects. We chartered a car and loaded our goods. We also took the

doors, windows, nails, etc., which we needed for the new houses we intended to build.

As soon as we landed in the south I at once arranged for appointments at several different places. There was a greater contrast between the people of the south and the north in their habits and expressions than in any other place I had ever been. There did not seem to be any affinity between us only as they wanted to sell us something, and then they asked the highest price for everything. They had learned that the Northerners generally had money when they came there, and they wanted it. I had not yet learned that nearly all the people in the south hated the Yankees, as they called us. The losing of their slaves and the destruction of their property during the time of the war had set the most of them against the Northerners. That country had been a regular thoroughfare for the armies. The soldiers had burned up their fences, and filled up their wells, and played havoc generally. They would kill a calf, take the hindquarters and leave the rest to spoil. They would rob their hen-roosts and smoke-houses, and give them no remuneration whatever. After such treatment as this any one can readily see how the people of the south would naturally feel; and then to have us come down there to teach them was beneath their dignity, of course.

At one of my appointments an old man endorsed my preaching for two or three Sabbaths, and then I missed him at the meetings. One day I met him and asked why he had stopped attending the serv-

ices. He replied that he could not attend without endorsing what I said, for my sermons were founded on the Bible and they agreed with his experience; but he said he did not dare come any more, for if he did his neighbors would turn against him, and he did not know what they would do to him. It was not long before I had no congregation and was obliged to find a new place at which to preach. At first the people would turn out well, but soon they would stop coming.

In the country where I was the people had an easy going religion. They gave more attention to visiting and eating when they went to their meetings than they did to the worship of God. The different denominations would generally unite and go from place to place on the different Sundays of the month. After their meetings were over they would have a good visit and a good dinner before going home. Once a year, in July or August, they would have a "big meeting," lasting a week or two, when they would all come together and have a good time; then they could carry up a good report to conference. Such a religion led no one to conflict with sin or the views of others, and so all went on in harmony. But my gospel gun would hit sin broadside, both in and out of the church, and then they would say, "Thus saying thou reproachest us also."

I attended an M. E. conference one Sunday at Tullahoma, and the bishop preached a very smooth sermon. No one was hit, and all who professed religion were recognized as saints. At the close the

bishop asked those who were on their way to heaven to arise, and nearly all who were present arose. He then said to the few who remained sitting, "Now, you do not wish to be left behind, just arise and go with us," and the most of them did as they were requested to do. That is a sample of the manner in which all the denominations carried on their meetings. They had plenty of "religion," but only a very little "salvation."

I went far and near getting out appointments and preaching to the people with but little or no success. They would seem glad to have me come at first, but would soon show what they wanted by telling me that they had quite a tract of land which they would sell very cheap, and that if I would get some one to come down there and buy they would give me a large commission. I told them I was not like Jacob's sons, selling my brother Joseph, that if I should get any one to come I would give the purchaser the bounty.

In that part of Tennessee the land was very poor and the most of it had been used for the purpose of raising slaves. The negroes would raise a little corn with which they made their hoe-cake, and the hogs would fatten on acorns. The negroes would live and grow on hoe-cake, bacon and a few vegetables, and when their master wanted money he would sell a girl or boy for from five hundred to eight hundred dollars, according to the age, size and ability. To quite an extent this was the way the people had made their living in that part of the country; but

of course there was some good land on which cotton was raised. When slavery was abolished their way of making money was gone. It seemed to me that the land was cursed for the sins of the people.

I felt at times that I had been led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. The longer I stayed the less chance I saw of doing good. It was my mistake in trying to get a home there. I had now invested all that I had (about \$1,500) in that country. I saw what a failure I had made, and I began to pray God to deliver me in some way. My boy and I had ploughed and fenced the old land, and we expected to pay expenses and make a living. We had built a good house and barn. But our efforts were all to no purpose.

I finally found a chance to trade my place to a man who had been raised in the south for a place near Olivet, South Dakota. I traded land, stock, and all I had, and we moved to our new home after having lived in Tennessee about four years.

CHAPTER XVIII.

WHEN we moved from Tennessee to Dakota, my son Frank, who had married, went with us and attended to the farm. My place was situated only three or four miles from the town of Olivet, where there was a Free Methodist church, and as there was no pastor the chairman, Rev. J. B. Freeland, asked me to take charge of the circuit during the remainder of the year. I was still a member of the Canada conference. This was in June, 1887.

The church building at Olivet was not finished and there was also a debt upon it. I wanted the circuit to pay off the debt and furnish material to finish the church, but they thought we ought to have a revival first and get some one converted so we would have help to complete the church. But I could see no chance for a revival at that time.

I did not attend conference that fall, but was again appointed to the Olivet circuit, and the delegate succeeded in getting the conference appointed at Olivet for the next fall. The next summer we completed the church and paid off the debt.

According to appointment the annual conference met at Olivet, October 17, 1888. This was the sixth

annual session of the Dakota conference. B. T. Roberts was president and W. N. Coffee secretary. I was received into the conference by transfer from the Canada conference, and was again appointed to the Olivet circuit. I told Brother Roberts that I was all preached out, and they had better put me somewhere else. He said he had thought just the same about himself. He had edited the *Earnest Christian* for many years and then had been elected editor of the *Free Methodist*, but he had kept going, and he said I must go ahead and the Lord would make up what I lacked. I took courage and started in to do my best. At the first quarterly meeting after conference, the work broke out; quite a number were converted, and twenty joined the church. Two were converted in that revival meeting who afterwards became preachers. These were Rev. Spencer Shaw and Rev. Charles VanMarter. To God be all the glory.

In the fall of 1889 the annual conference session was held at Boyden, Sioux county, Iowa. It was decided to supply the work with one traveling chairman instead of two, as formerly, and, much to my surprise, I was elected. I told them they were running a great risk, as I was a stranger and entirely unacquainted with the work. Rev. J. B. Freeland was made conference evangelist and financial agent of Wessington Springs seminary. We were in debt on the seminary and there was but little prospect of raising the money we needed in Dakota. But Brother Freeland was acquainted in the east, and he

went there and succeeded in raising money to pay off the debt and to purchase new seats for the seminary. Praise the Lord!

I inquired out the lay of the country and began my work with fear and trembling. But Jesus came to my help. I feared holding the quarterly meetings at the seminary the most of all. The idea of my going there in my ignorance! But God went with me and raised me above my surroundings, and we had what the Salvation Army calls a "free and easy." The altar was filled with seekers and the teachers and saints were down among them like so many children. Glory to God in the highest! How he can help us through if we are only humble.

On my rounds I found a few at one place who had not been reported the year before. I visited them and found some of the salt of the earth. In this community I first saw a "dugout." A brother by the name of Gaddis was taking me around the neighborhood when I saw a smoke seemingly coming up out of the ground. I asked what it was and was told that it was a dugout; a family lived down in there. We went in and found it very comfortable. An old couple lived there who had come from the old country. They were both religious. I prayed with them and they seemed very much pleased with the visit. They thanked me and asked me to call again. I was quite favorably impressed with the neighborhood, and soon sent Brother Earle and his wife up there to hold revival meetings, and a good class was raised up. Among those who were

converted was the son of the family that lived in the dugout. But when he wanted to join us there was opposition from the old people, and the poor boy had a hard time until they got saved. This was Rev. John Whiteside, who is now one of our preachers in the South Dakota conference.

At another place I found a circuit without a preacher, and in looking over the class-book I saw the name of a young woman who lived some distance away, whom I did not see. The next time I visited that place I insisted on seeing her, and so her father took me to her house. We found them living in a sod house, which, however, was very comfortable. They were glad to see us and her husband rode around to the neighbors and invited them to a meeting which we had hurriedly announced. We had a good turn out and a good meeting.

I looked around some and decided that there was a chance to do good in that community, and so I sent a sister up there and she raised up a good society, and two preachers, Rev. S. P. Westfield and Rev. Wallace Meachem, who sprang from that work, are still laboring for the Master in the west. One of them had been a very wicked "cowboy" off in the "wild west," but he was thoroughly converted and is now a useful man. He was very apt. One day at one of our general quarterly meetings he said, "When we are hunting prairie chickens we don't sit and wait for them to come to us, but we go after them; and so if we want sinners saved we must get right after them."

That year we had a good camp-meeting on an island in Jim river, near Forestburg. It was a heavy cross for me to take charge of the services and preach before my superiors, but I was really compelled to go ahead with the meeting. The Lord came to my help, bless His name, and some good was accomplished. To God be all the glory!

I think it was that year we had a camp-meeting at Boyden. Some of the members there had gone into fanaticism and had left the church. This greatly injured our work in that place. Wherever fanaticism goes it kills the work. I had rather handle a dozen deadheads than one who has run off the track. God help us to keep level. Common sense and salvation always go together. We must keep the salvation of souls before all else. If we allow manifestations or anything else to be made more prominent than the work of saving men, the devil will come in as an angel of light and will make havoc. A preacher and his wife were on that work one year who went to extremes on divine healing. Not that God does not still heal the body, for He does when it is for His glory and our good; but this man and his wife were opposed to the use of all remedies. They were both "ailing" and had "healing meetings" for themselves and claimed to be healed, but they were not healed. I told them of some simple remedies to take, but they said they were not going to the drug store, but to God. The next time I came around she was past help, and he did not live long afterwards. They were good people,

but both of their lives were sacrificed by their extreme views. At least, so it looks to me.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE eighth annual session of the Dakota conference convened at Sioux Falls, South Dakota, September 24-28, 1890. It was decided to supply the work with two traveling chairmen, and, notwithstanding all of my mistakes and ignorance, I was elected one of them and was appointed to the Sioux Falls and North districts. Rev. J. B. Freeland was also elected chairman and was appointed to the Mitchell and Northwest districts.

Something of the nature of that western work, and the hardships incident thereto, will be seen from the following report on the state of the work, which was adopted by this conference:

"The Dakota conference is largely made up of people that came to Dakota from eastern states who had previously belonged to the Free Methodist church. The membership is very much scattered. The circuits, as reported in the minutes, have but few members. In the past there have not been preachers to supply them; consequently the chairmen have held quarterly meetings once in three months and were obliged to hurry around their districts, having but little time to devote to holding protracted meetings. In consequence of the same the work has moved very slowly; support has been small and there has been poor encouragement for

preachers to come here to labor. But God is raising up men and women to take the fields and work them. We are obliged to raise up our own laborers. Every conference has to do so, especially those of the west where the people are poor and very much scattered as they are here. Men that have lived in the east and have been on good circuits that have been disciplined to give them a good support are not suitable persons to labor on the frontier and raise up new circuits. As a general rule they have not the missionary fire that will enable them to push out and brave the hardships that they necessarily have to face here in this land amidst the blizzards and rough weather of this country. But God is putting his hand on laborers here who are acclimated and enured to the hardships and privations incident to this country, and they are responding nobly by saying, 'Here am I, send me;' and, thank God, a cloud the size of a man's hand is seen in the spiritual horizon. The revival fire is beginning to burn, some souls have been saved, others are seeking, and we expect to see a large ingathering of souls this coming conference year. All we need is laborers with the push that the Holy Ghost fire gives, well-balanced and with good sense, and a membership equally consecrated to back them up, who will respond to all the claims of God upon them to push this battle to the gates. We expect in the name of Israel's God to see victory all along the line."

I began the years' work feeling my utter inability to fill the position to which I had been elected, but I had signed the blank and God was filling it out, and I was obliged to answer to the call or backslide. Rev. W. R. Cusick used to say that there were three kinds of preachers: one kind could not preach without their written sermons; the second

would not preach without a good salary, and the third class was called of God, and had to preach or be damned. I must have been one of the last class of preachers for when I would think of stopping I would dry up in my experience.

That year when I visited the Grand Meadow circuit I found the class very small, and saw that they needed assistance in the work to make it go. I went around the circuit with the preacher, Rev. D. W. Cook, and found a schoolhouse in a good community where no meetings had been held. I said to Brother Cook, "This is just the place to strike in for a revival. You will be sure to have a break if you go at it in earnest." He began the meeting, and as soon as I could I returned to assist him for two or three weeks. When I reached the community I found that the meeting had frozen up the second time. It was a very cold, blustering time, and Brother Cook lived seven miles away. I struck for the schoolhouse, announced an appointment, and went into the work with all my might, and God and the preacher both came to my help. We soon had the fire going so hot that no snow or wind could put it out. I put the plough down deep. One night I was very personal. I said, "Here, Joe, God wants to save you"—one of the worst men here—"and then hold you up as a specimen of his work," and Joe got saved, sure enough. The next night his sister went forward. I went to Joe, and said, "Now you were converted last night, and you know just what you had to do;

now go and help your sister Clara." He went, and they cried and agonized and prayed. It was not long before they struck fire and were out after others. Redfield says that when we get the work down deep enough it will go if there is not a preacher within twenty miles of it, and the class that was raised up at this point proved that saying true, for some of these people would drive for miles across the prairie to find their neighbors and get them saved.

We had a camp-meeting near there, on Charles Thompson's place, the next summer and Rev. B. R. Jones, the editor of the *Free Methodist*, assisted in the meeting. God came in great power. One day Brother Jones went away beyond himself in preaching, and the people gathered around after the meeting was dismissed, and said, "Where did you find such a man as this?" Brother Jones heard it and said, "The woods are full of such men, only get them filled with the Holy Ghost." One day I went off the ground to a creek to baptize some, and God endorsed the ordinance. One woman was so blessed that she broke loose from me and shouted and made the water fly in every direction with her hands, and a stout man nearly lost his strength while in the water, but it was all in divine order. In one sermon Brother Jones said that the human family were great imitators of one another, if one leading person had peculiar manifestations, others would be apt to have the same, but when the Holy Ghost came upon the people there would be a diversity, they would not

all act alike. That was soon to be demonstrated to be true, for the Spirit of the Lord came upon the people one day and some fell; some laughed; some cried, and some jumped, all acted differently, but they were wrought upon by the same Spirit, and "the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." The people went away saying, "We have seen strange things to-day." Brother O. A. Harpel attended that meeting and said that he had been watching us for years, but that we went so slowly he had decided we were not doing much; but he said he had seen more souls really saved there at that little meeting than he had seen at any of the large meetings, where hundreds of converts had been reported. He cast in his lot with us, and became one of the despised little ones, and went on singing,

"I had rather be the least of them who are the Lord's alone,
Than wear a royal diadem and sit upon a throne."

We had a tent-meeting not long after that near Parker. Brother O. A. Harpel was with us and rendered effective service. A number of the converts from the Grand Meadow circuit came with their tent. They were all alive for souls. One night a sinner came forward who failed to get converted. His wife was a Roman Catholic and opposed him greatly. The next morning this band of laborers from Mt. Pleasant could not go home until the man was saved, and so they went to his house to pray for him. He saw them coming and expected such a racket that he hid. They went in the house and

told his wife why they had come, and she said that she did not want any of their praying there, and would not have it in the house. They then went outside near the end of the house and knelt and began to pray. It was not long before the man came out of his hiding place and was gloriously saved, and his wife was brought under such conviction that she found no rest until she sought and found God also. There was a young woman who came to that meeting who was so sickly that she could hardly ride and she was converted and healed, and went about the tent praising God.

Later in the season we had a camp-meeting near Wessington Springs. During this meeting we had a hurricane which shattered the tabernacle badly, and set all of our tents fluttering in the breeze. The dust flew until some of us looked as dirty as though we had been working with a thrashing-machine. Brother J. G. Terrill was there and was an inspiration to the meeting. I shall never forget him. At the dinner table one day he said, "We will have a class-meeting. I am saved and prayed up to date and ready for heaven," then turning to an unsaved girl he said, "Will you meet me there?" There was so much of Jesus in his words that she was greatly affected, and at once broke down and began to weep.

CHAPTER XX.

THE next session of the annual conference was held at Wessington Springs, October 7-10, 1891, General Superintendent Roberts, presiding. I was elected chairman and appointed to the Sioux Falls district. The reports this fall were encouraging. There was quite an increase in the membership of the conference. The year passed quickly and pleasantly and we met at conference the next fall at Olivet. Again I was elected chairman and once more was appointed to the Sioux Falls district. This year was one of the eventful years of my life, for before it was time to attend another conference, my beloved companion left me and went to join the company of the bloodwashed on the other shore.

During the early part of the year my wife went to Iowa, Wisconsin and Michigan, visiting her relatives. I went as far as New Lisbon, Wisconsin, with her. While on that visit she had a stroke of paralysis. After her recovery she wrote me about it, and said she would probably have two more and die with the third; and if she died before I did, she wanted me to preach her funeral sermon from the text, "She hath done what she could." She also selected the hymns to be sung at the funeral. She had an-

other slight stroke after she reached home. Soon after this she awoke me one morning making a noise like a child in distress. I arose and found her in a spasm. I called my son and his wife and we did what we could to relieve her, and she was soon restored to consciousness. A physician was called who said that it was paralysis, and that my wife would live only a few days. We were instructed to watch her closely as she was liable to drop off at any time. She lingered for about two months. I secured the services of some of the brethren to attend to my quarterly meetings and stayed with her day and night. She recovered so she could walk around, some days without assistance. Her mind and speech were confused, but sometimes she would think and speak quite well. One day I took her to Olivet and left her at Brother Piper's. She wanted to stay and I promised to call for her at 4 o'clock that afternoon. She seemed to enjoy the visit, but began to look anxiously for me as the time approached for leaving. When I came she wanted me to get her something at the store, but could not speak or write so as to be understood. I went to the store with her, and she tried to tell the clerk what it was she wanted, but he failed to understand her. I then purchased her some oysters and crackers as she was very fond of them.

Sometimes the neighbors would call to see her. She was always glad to see them, but if they remained any length of time and talked very much, she would become confused and wild, and I would

be obliged to ask them to leave. When we were alone I could usually quiet her in a short time.

My wife held on to her integrity to God till the last. She greatly enjoyed our family devotions and after I had read and prayed, she would pray a short prayer. Her death was quite sudden. One day as she was about to lie down, she dropped to the floor. She was at once laid upon the bed, and I was called, but she only survived an instant after I reached the bedside. Her pure spirit had gone to be with God who gave it.

It did not seem to me that I could preach her funeral sermon, and there was one of our preachers who had lived near her for many years, and I thought that he could preach from the text she had selected, and do justice to the subject, as he had known her so well. I accordingly sent a telegram requesting him to come and officiate, but he did not receive the dispatch, and as we were expecting him until the last moment, no other arrangements were made. I was therefore compelled to take charge of the services and preach the sermon. I told the people that it was her request that I should do this.

I had known her for forty-seven years and was familiar with her history before we were married. She was the eldest of the family and had worked out nearly all of the time until she was twenty-four years of age. For more than forty-five years she had shared with me in all of my trials and had stood by me after I began to preach. She did not try to exhort or preach very much, but she always stood by

with her testimonies, and when people would become offended with my rough talk, she would say, "He is rough, but it is true, is it not?" She had faithfully done what she could, and we laid her body away to rest until the general resurrection morning, feeling assured that her soul had gone to be with Jesus.

The following obituary, written by myself was published in the *Free Methodist*:

"Mrs. C. H. Sage was born May 5, 1823, in the town of York, Genesee county, New York, and died June 30, 1893.

"Her maiden name was Hannah Teachout. She was converted at the age of seventeen, and joined the M. E. church. She moved to Wisconsin in 1846, and was married to C. H. Sage, April 25, 1847. She united with the Free Methodist church in 1867, and held her Christian integrity up to the time of her death. She had two light paralytic strokes during the last summer and winter, and a very severe one April 30, from which she never recovered. Her mind and speech were confused, but as long as she could kneel she prayed quite understandingly and fervently. She died suddenly, without a struggle, and went to her reward.

"She was the mother of six boys. Four have gone before; two remain, with her husband and many friends and relatives, to mourn their loss. The funeral was held at Olivet, South Dakota, in the Free Methodist church. Her funeral sermon was preached by the writer, at her request, from the text, 'She hath done what she could' (Mark 14:8). F. W. Moon assisted in the services. She selected the text and the hymns, and sent them to me September last. She has gone to rest with Jesus."

After the funeral was over I went to a camp-meet-

ing which was being held on my district. I found that it needed a balance wheel; however the meeting closed up very well and some good was done. After the camp-meeting was over I went to my district and began holding quarterly meetings as usual. But many times I was lonely and sad. My wife had left me and now I could no longer pray for her or feel the inspiration which had so often come to me through her prayers. The usual Monday morning letter could not be written, and I could not receive any more comforting letters from her. But the work in which I was engaged occupied my mind, for I preached somewhere nearly every night as I journeyed through the country, and I found that even in this sore affliction the Lord sustained and strengthened me.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE eleventh annual session of the South Dakota conference was held at Boyden, Iowa, October 4-7, 1893. Rev. J. B. Freeland and myself were elected chairmen. I was appointed to the Mitchell and Northwest districts. I went to my work determined to do the best I could and have success. During the year a call came from Garden City for me to come and hold meetings. Thomas Procnier and wife who had been converted in Walsingham, Canada, had moved near Garden City and were asking for help. I made arrangements and soon went and began revival meetings. As usual I commenced by visiting from house to house. One day I met an old man who gruffly told me to go into the house. I did so and soon found that they had lived neighbors to my mother in Wisconsin, and that I was well acquainted with many of their relatives. This soon turned the tide, and I had a hearty welcome from the whole family as long as I wished to stay. They all went to meeting and not long afterwards we had a meeting at his house. I heard that he was saved after this. The work near Garden City moved well. Souls were saved and a class was raised up, and the Canadian brother was put in class-leader. I held

quarterly meetings there during the remainder of the year, and the next year a preacher was sent to the work.

The time seemed to drag heavily on my hands. I was lonesome and without a home of my own and began to think seriously about choosing another companion. I followed the directions of the Discipline, and advised with my brethren with regard to the matter. I finally decided to make a move in that direction. I wrote to Miss Maggie J. Hagle, a well-known sister in Canada, between forty-five and fifty years of age. Her father and mother were both dead, and she had no home only with her married brothers or sisters. She was one of the first laborers I put in the field in Ontario. She decided to cast in her lot with mine the rest of our days. She came to Dakota, and arrived there while I was in a camp-meeting. This meeting closed on Sunday night, the 8th of July, and we were married July 9, 1894. Brother David Fear married us.

Immediately after this Laura Gatheney, Lucy A. Hartman (now missionary in Africa), and my wife and myself stepped into a carriage and rode one hundred and seventy-five miles across the prairie to a camp-meeting. We held meetings as we went along. We arrived safely, repaired the large tabernacle, pitched our own family tent on the broad prairie, and one of the brethren went out on the prairie and gathered a load of buffalo chips for fuel. The meeting began well. One of the brethren preached about "the sound of a going in the tops of

the mulberry trees," and my wife wondered where the trees were; but there came a rumbling noise, sure enough, and souls were saved for which we praise the Lord. This meeting though not large, was good and crowned with success.

I shall never forget a visit we made to the home of Brother and Sister Loomis, for a little rest. While there we held a meeting at a village called Oneida. It was a good meeting and there was much interest. We had a great desire to remain and hold revival meeting, but were obliged to go on and hold the quarterly meetings.

One night while going home we lost our way. This was a very easy thing to do on the prairie as the roads ran in every direction; there were no fences, and so there was nothing to hinder everyone having a road to his own farm. As I was going to one of my quarterly meetings one winter I reached the depot at 9 o'clock at night. A man met me and we started on a drive of twelve miles. I asked him if it was safe to drive out so far in the night. He said, "Yes, my horses will take me home if I don't touch a line." We had not gone very far before we found ourselves out of the track and the horses sometimes plunging through snow drifts. There was no light in sight and a cloud had covered the North Star, so we had nothing for a guide. It seems to me out on the prairie in the night like a person being out on the ocean without a chart or compass. At last we saw a light in the distance, and we drove to it. It was a sod house. The driver soon found

out his whereabouts, and we reached his house late in the night. There was no light in the window, for he was a bachelor. He soon built a fire and prepared supper. It was a risky trip and I did not care to take another like it.

The Dakota work was not free from the devil's attacks. At one time so-called social purity and fanaticism came in and did much damage. The extreme views taken by some often lead to a species of Free-loveism and Christian affinity, and when this is carried to extremes, it will bring in distraction and every evil work; and will bring the cause of God into disrepute, so that it will take many years to outgrow it. God help us to keep level, and always do the exact right.

Just before conference we visited Sister Hartman's father. Before Sister Hartman received her call to Africa, she had worked hard to secure one hundred and sixty acres of land, but this had been gladly given up when she felt it to be her duty to go as a foreign missionary.

My wife and I went on to Potter county, and held a quarterly meeting and then started back to Mitchell to attend the annual conference. We stopped over night with Brother and Sister J. K. Freeland in their comfortable home. My wife said it was surely an oasis in the desert. When she met Sister Freeland she sat down and burst into tears; she had at last found a place of rest. She had left a land of gardens and fruit, and this country seemed to her like a desert indeed, with the barren sand

plains, and its heat and drouth; but Sister Freeland knew how to sympathize with her. We were all refreshed and went on our way to Mitchell, the seat of conference, with rejoicing.

I was again elected chairman, but resigned. The brethren were anxious to have us stay, and we were offered a home in the seminary, but I thought I was too old to travel over those bleak prairies, and decided that it would be better for a man of my age to go to Oregon or Washington. I accordingly took my transfer and wrote one of the chairmen in the Oregon and Washington conference, and he appointed me to Baker City, Oregon. He thought there was a good opening at Baker City, and that I would receive a good support; but when we reached our new circuit, we found only two members, and they were poor. There was no parsonage and no place in which to preach. We also found the people very much prejudiced against holiness preaching. There had been two holiness evangelists preaching in that community who had turned out badly and brought disgrace on the cause. Our people had also been associated with a band of laborers who had many physical demonstrations, but who had, unwisely, said some very hard things about the Methodists, and so instead of finding the way open for a revival, the door seemed tightly closed. I did not know what to do, only to talk to God, for there was no one else to whom I could go for means. I had a little money with me and I hired two furnished rooms in which to live. Then I began to search for

a hall, and the only one I could find for which I dared to assume the rent, was over a shop, carried on and owned by a Spiritualist. There were three houses of ill-repute within a stone's throw, and a street of low Chinamen near by. In the midst of such surroundings we began to hold meetings. Only a few turned out at first, but as we went "around the walls" the people began to come in slowly. Our hall was difficult to reach and I soon found a chance to clean and fit up a hall on the ground floor which was much better. There was a Mormon settlement near by and they owned a saw mill and a railroad up the mountain where the timber was which they were cutting. We went up there and held a meeting, but saw no fruit. We then went in another direction, but saw but little chance to raise up a work there. We continued our work in Baker City, and as a result of our efforts some prominent individuals were saved. One man and his wife who belonged to the Baptist church were brought in. He was a telegraph operator and received good wages, and paid one hundred dollars a year to the church. His wife's father was a preacher, and she had belonged to the church for twelve years. These people began to attend our meetings, and were brought under conviction, and clearly saved. Several others were converted and we raised up a class of twelve. Two preachers, Rev. S. H. Yockey and E. H. Waring, went out into the work from that class.

Baker City had not proved a healthful place for us. The water was poor, and my wife was sick with

a fever. But the year was drawing to a close, and we prepared for conference.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE annual session of the Oregon and Washington conference, which my wife and I attended, was held in Portland, Oregon, April 3-7, 1895. I was received into the conference by transfer from the South Dakota conference. I was appointed to the First church, Seattle, Washington, and my wife to the Third church. Her appointment was at Green Lake, about seven miles out. She would go out on Saturday night on the street car, and return on Monday morning. Some good was done there. We cleared off the ground and built a small church. Two or three old men and myself did the most of the work. I called it, "The Old Man's Brigade." The church was finished and paid for, and I trust a foundation was laid for a good work.

I did not see much accomplished at the First church. The fact is that I am not adapted to city work. There was a camp-meeting held about seventeen miles up the sound, that summer, and a class was raised up. We looked after the work there a part of the time. Some of the members lived out in the country, and we went out there in the midst of the heaviest timber I ever saw. It was very difficult for the people to clear the land and make a living.

While in Seattle my wife became a great sufferer from rheumatism, and I did not dare remain there, for fear she would be laid up for life; and so after laboring seven months I was compelled to resign my work and come to Michigan. In Seattle we found some of the salt of the earth. Brother and Sister Beers and Brother and Sister Dutton are among the level headed, true and tried ones. They ministered much to our necessities. God bless them!

On our way to Michigan we visited a brother of mine at Milwaukee, Wisconsin. We then visited another at Ionia, Michigan, and my son Charles at Three Rivers, Michigan. I also visited some of the circuits on which I had labored in former years. Brother Briggs, a chairman, in the North Michigan conference, asked us to take a new point and raise up a work, but I did not feel able to endure the labor that such an undertaking would bring upon me. As I am not much of a preacher I have always had to do most of my work on my knees from house to house among the people. I have thought, since, that perhaps I made a mistake in not taking the place Brother Briggs offered me, but I am obliged to leave that among all the rest of my mistakes.

After we had visited what we cared to, we went to Marine City, Michigan, to Sister Robert Baker's, where my wife had stored her goods before going to Dakota. Here there was a church called the Church of Daniel's Band. My wife had labored with them some before going west, and at that time they did good work; some were saved, some were healed of

bodily disease, and God manifested himself among them in power. But afterward they seemed to think that manifestations were "the mighty power of God," and they carried them to excess, no doubt thinking that if they could get enough of that power it would sweep everything before it. They carried these things so far that it brought them into disrepute among the people and some of their members had become sick of their performances. They operated some as the Nazarites did when the Free Methodists first started in New York State.

When I reached Marine City I went to the leader and told him who I was, and offered to assist them in their meetings, if there was anything I could do. He invited me to come and take part in the services. I was with them only three nights, however, until I saw that I could do them no good. I had freedom in talking and explaining the scriptures, in a plain, practical way, showing that God's salvation saved the people from their sins, but their manner of worship was so peculiar and eccentric that I saw I could not work with them. I could not endorse all of their doings, and soon they began to be burdened for me.

As several requested us to remain in Marine City and hold some meetings, I began to look around for a hall, but no suitable place could be rented. The Salvation Army had been there and failed, and this Band had not succeeded, and the people were not inclined to let their halls for religious purposes.

I finally found a roller skating rink 48x80 feet with a leanto on one side, 16x44 feet, that I could

get for six hundred dollars. It was in a good location, but if it was bought there was no one to become responsible for it but myself. After much prayer and examination I concluded to run the risk of putting our last dollar into it. It was cold weather so I enclosed a room 30x48 with building paper and went to holding meetings. We had good congregations and a good interest, with a number forward for prayers, when the small-pox closed up all churches and schools. The leanto into which we had moved ran over about a foot on the next lot, and the owner ordered it removed within thirty days, so I enclosed a room in the main building, and moved into it. It was only enclosed with rough lumber and was very cold.

I now decided to make the back end of the main building into a parsonage, and leave the front part for a church. It required much hard labor, and I had the most of it to do as I had no money to hire help. The people assisted me some, however, in labor and money. After about two years I had it completed. The old rink had been thoroughly remodeled. It cost me much for material, plumbing, plastering, etc. At one time I found myself behind, and could not pay my bills. I went to Sister Palaster, at Richmond, and she loaned me one hundred dollars without interest or security, and when I settled with her she gave me some of the principal. The Lord will reward her I know.

In the fall of 1898 I went before the stationing committee to see if I would be permitted to remain

at Marine City another year. I was told that I was just the man they wanted to see. They had a church and parsonage in Bay City that was in debt and all run down, and they said they would put a financial agent in the field to collect and pay the debt, and they wanted me to go and repair the property and try and resurrect the society. I held off, but they pressed me, declaring that they did not have another man who could do as well as I. They urged me to try it. I saw the necessity in the case and although I was nearly seventy-three years old, I consented to go. We left our home for another man to step into, without rent, and we moved up to Bay City. We found the property in a dilapidated condition. The window glass was about all out of the parsonage; the roof was leaking; the house was dirty and black; the chimney was smoking, and the weeds and thistles were waist high around the building. When the church was built there was a good society, but through bad management, extreme notions and fanatical freaks, the membership and congregation had nearly all left. When a preacher thinks he knows it all and that no one else has salvation but himself and his clique, it is time to call a halt. At one time the property was sold to the colored people on contract, but they failed to meet the contract, and our people were obliged to take it back. A good sister gave us the use of one room which we used as a parsonage. It served for kitchen, dining-room, bed-room, sitting-room and parlor. We put a part of our goods in the church. There were no

members to look to; no congregations from which to take collections, and no means furnished for the repairing. I had a little money with me which belonged to another, and a little of my own, but all of it did not go far; the financial agent called to see me and gave me two dollars. The chairman and agent went out to solicit, but received only a little, as the people had no confidence in the Free Methodists. I went at the work with a will, working early and late, and began holding regular meetings in the church. I paid out five dollars for window lights alone, and put them in myself. I shingled the roof and built a chimney; repaired the kitchen; built a new sidewalk and a woodshed, and, in fact, kept at it until we were quite comfortable for the winter. Some of the members came back and a few were converted during the year.

In the spring I began to work on the outside of the building. The buildings were quite large but I nailed the old siding on so it was solid, and then gave the buildings three coats of paint on the outside and two on the inside, besides calcimining the church. I did all the calcimining and painting excepting two or three days' work. Sister King, from Saginaw, helped varnish the seats and chairs. My wife did nearly all of the pastoral visiting and led one-half of the meetings, besides doing much other work that rested upon her. Before conference the work was completed and the bills were all paid; and the financial agent had collected enough to pay the debt, so that all was clear.

I was used up, and when I went to conference that fall was suffering with erysipelas. I told the stationing committee that my work was done at Bay City, and they need not return me there, but when the appointments were read the general superintendent said, "Bay City, C. H. Sage." For the first time in my life I backed up and would not go, and I felt perfectly clear in the course that I pursued. A change was made and I went back to Marine City.

The work at Marine City moves slowly. The influence of that which is being passed off on the people as the work of the Holy Ghost is detrimental to the cause; but notwithstanding all that has come upon us, many, at different times, have been saved, and many more have been brought under conviction for sin. I believe that even yet God will do a work in that place.

CHAPTER XXIII.

IN THE fall of 1901 I saw that I was worn out so that I was not able to take charge of a work any longer. I accordingly went to conference and asked for superannuated relations, and my request was granted. My claim amounts to one hundred and fifty dollars a year. When the Lord's claim of ten per cent. is taken out, my taxes paid and fuel furnished, it would not leave a large amount for clothing and food. The conference granted me an amount equal to eight cents a member for my support that year, as I would not receive my claim until the following fall.

I then proposed to sell to the conference my interest in the mission property at Marine City for seven hundred dollars. This was the amount that we put into it when we bought the old rink. I offered to donate all my labor in converting it into a church and parsonage. The conference concluded to make the purchase, and the property was deeded to the Marine City society. After selling this property we started out to buy us a home. After due consideration we purchased a place in Ovid, Clinton county, Michigan, for six hundred dollars. The payments were to be made as we received the money

for the Marine City property. Soon after this we went to Turner, Arenac county, Michigan, where my wife has two brothers and a sister living. We remained there three or four weeks and held meetings in a schoolhouse the most of the time, but we did not see much accomplished. My wife had been at this place several years before and had held a few meetings and at that time several arose for prayers, but she was obliged to leave, and before they were converted the devil came in with Mormonism, Adventism, and a secret society life insurance lodge, and "bagged" them nearly all up for time and eternity. It is a great mistake to go into a place and preach the truth until the people are under conviction if we cannot stay long enough to get them saved.

From this place we returned to Marine City, but soon went to visit my youngest son in Mishawaka, Indiana. He is a first class carpenter and joiner and has been a foreman, taking charge of a number of men, for several years. I brought him up to work at building, painting, or anything that came to hand, and when he began for himself he took hold of whatever he found to do without serving any apprenticeship and has worked his way up to where he now is. It is a good thing to bring our children up to work. He has one son thirteen years old, who seems to have a mechanical turn. My son is not a Christian, but is strictly moral. One Sabbath during the time we were making this visit we went to South Bend and attended the services in the Free Methodist

church. We had a good time. They were all alive. We found them natural born Free Methodists of the "old stamp," Brother C. E. Edinger, their pastor is a live man, and God was blessing his labors.

We then visited my son who lives at Three Rivers, Michigan. He is running a commercial business college and has eighty scholars. He and his wife do the teaching and are very successful in their work. He also teaches a class from the Union school, book-keeping. He has schools three nights during each week. My son took the school in its infancy and by hard work and close application has brought it up to its present state of prosperity. He is a self-made man. I helped him a little when he began to go to school, but for the most part, he was obliged to work his way through alone. He went as chaplain during the Cuban war and served faithfully in that capacity. When he returned from the war he took charge of his school again. They have one fine little daughter five years old quite large and matured for one of her age. We went there to spend the Christmas of 1901, and on December 23, I was taken down with pneumonia. I am told that I was dangerously sick, but I did not realize it for I was unconscious much of the time. If it had not have been for the best of care and medical treatment, together with the blessing of God, I should never have rallied. As soon as I was able we returned to Marine City and remained until the last of March, 1902. We then moved to Ovid, Michigan, where I now live. We have been obliged to make quite exten-

sive repairs on our property here, in order to have our little home comfortable and handy. Since coming here we have had charge of the Sunday evening services, as the pastor can only be here on Sunday mornings; but this small amount of labor tires my wife and me more than three appointments used to with many miles' drive. We are trying to keep out of the way of the car of salvation and do what little we can for souls, and the work is moving slowly. To God be all the glory.

It is now thirty-two years since I was received into the Michigan annual conference. I then had forty acres of land which I sold afterwards for two thousand dollars, besides some personal property. I have now seven hundred dollars in my home here, which is all I have left. But I am glad that I spent it all in a good cause. Souls have been saved, for which I praise the Lord. If I had my life to live over I would do more if I could. When I was converted I moved into Thanksgiving street and am there to-day. I have no bad complaints to bring. I hope to locate on Hallelujah avenue in glory, soon.

CHAPTER XXIV.

I WILL here relate a few incidents which should have appeared in the body of the book, but which I did not recall until too late.

When I was about twenty years of age I was invited to attend a wedding. After the ceremony was over and supper had been eaten, it began to rain very hard, so that it was impossible for the guests to leave. We soon became tired and restless, and it was not long before the company began to play button and other foolish plays which were common in those days. I did not take part for a long time, and it was only after much urging that I began to play with the rest. There was a woman among them, who took part in the plays, who belonged to the same church of which I was a member. I had considered her a good Christian, and it was only through her influence that I finally yielded. But I was so condemned that I did not profess religion for several months. A protracted meeting was being held in our community, and I attended. The preacher was continually hitting me, until I finally got out of the way by returning to God. At an afternoon meeting the man was present whose wedding I had attended. We walked together about half a mile and I asked

his forgiveness for setting such a bad example at his wedding. He said it was all right and then made a statement which convinced me that he had at one time been a Christian. I told him that I thought he had, but he denied it. The next day he again came to the meeting and arose and said, pointing to me, "That boy confessed to me yesterday, and I lied to him; to-day I have come five miles to confess to him." That humble confession led to the conversion of himself and wife, and his wife's father, mother and brother. Frank confessions are good for the soul, and have their effect on others.

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A man was reclaimed in a meeting I held in a certain place, and for some time prayed and talked freely in public, but all at once he stopped, and for two or three days he had nothing to say. He had a brother-in-law who was a professed infidel. One day he sent his boy to tell his brother-in-law to come at once to his house. He asked the boy if his father was sick. The boy replied that he was not, but that he had been "dumping around" for two or three days. The brother-in-law went at once and asked what was the trouble. He said, "Sit down, I want to talk to you. You will remember that I loaned you a shovel, and when you returned it, it was broken. I thought you had broken it, although you said you had not, and I made up my mind that I would get even with you. So I borrowed your plough coulter. I had it sharpened and the top fixed over so I thought you would not know it, but

yet I was afraid you might, and so after using it I would hide it. You remember you came after it one day, and my boys and I looked for it, with you, but we did not find it. I knew where it was all of the time. It was a real mean trick, and I am sorry and want you to forgive me. After I was converted I went to the granary to get some oats for my horses, one day, and as I was lifting the measure up out of the bin my eyes caught sight of the coulter, lying where I had put it upon a girt, and it seemed to say to me, 'You go and confess what you have done.' " This man then took his pocket-book in his hand and said, "Now just charge me all you want to, for all the trouble I have made you, and I will pay the bill. You know I am able to do it." He was weeping when he said this. His brother-in-law said, "Leander, I know you so well that I know you would not have made this confession for a horse. This shows me that there is a reality in religion, and I want it. I don't care anything about the coulter now, but I want to be saved."

Confession and restitution are plain requirements of the Bible. That is one reason why many people do not seek the Lord, and why others do not keep their religion after finding the Lord. The Lord Jesus says in the Sermon on the Mount, "If thou bring thy gift to the altar and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" (Matt. 5: 23, 24). It is God's business to

brighten up our memory, and he will attend to his business when we attend to ours. Infidels feed on the faults of professed Christians, but when we carry out the principles of the religion of the Bible, skepticism crumbles to the earth. Holy lives go much farther towards convicting the unsaved, than high sounding words or great sermons.

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At one time, when I was traveling the Gaines circuit, Edwards Matthews sent for me to come to Auburn, Michigan, to assist him in a revival meeting. I wrote him that I had a circuit of my own to attend to and that I could not go. But he sent a boy down in great haste with the money to pay my fare. He told the boy not to come back without me. When I saw his persistency I decided to go. The train was behind time, so we were late, and the boy who was with me went in great haste directly to the schoolhouse. We entered the building while they were singing the first hymn. Brother Matthews called upon me to pray, and as they were singing the second hymn he told me that I must preach. I took a familiar text and did the best I could. After the meeting was dismissed Brother Matthews said he wanted me to take charge of the meeting for a week, while he went to the quarterly meeting on his circuit. He said that he was obliged to go and that I must stay. I was only a "boy preacher" at that time and it seemed impossible for me to follow him in the meeting. All that I could do was to talk a little and invite the people forward. I feared the

meeting would lose interest, but it was put upon me and I dare not run. I became desperate, however, when I saw what was before me, and told the Lord that He would have to help me, or I should certainly fail.

The next morning I began to go "around the walls," blowing my little ram's-horn. There was not much shouting I assure you. The third house I came to was a liquor hotel. I went into the bar-room and as I entered I recognized a man from the bounds of my circuit. He was a cripple, all drawn up with rheumatism. I had been at his house and he was glad to see me and introduced me to the hotel-keeper who was his brother, and to the bartender. I at once asked the privilege of singing; it was granted me, and the door was opened into the dining-room so the women could hear. I began to sing, "How lost was my condition, till Jesus made me whole." Quite a number of drinking men were sitting around, and they stared at me as though an angel had fallen from heaven. When the hymn was sung, I asked the privilege of praying, which was granted. After prayer I told them I would like to use their sitting-room the next afternoon for a prayer-meeting. The proprietor said I might have it, and that he would have it seated and warmed. We held the meeting. Soon after this the hotel-keeper and his wife and daughter were all under deep conviction; but he said that the old hotel and barn was all the property he had, and that he could not make a living by boarding, but would have

to sell liquor and have balls, and therefore he could not be a Christian. But he said I was welcome to come to his house any time and stay as long as I wished to, free of charge. I afterwards held an overflow meeting in his bar-room. The Lord tried hard to save that man, but, like the rich young ruler we find in the Scriptures, he went away sorrowful. He exchanged his soul for an old tavern and a vile business, simply because there was money in it.

I kept going "around the walls" forenoons, and holding meetings afternoons at private houses, and evenings at the schoolhouse. The meetings did not take hold as they should have done and were somewhat tied up, but as I continued to visit in the community I discovered the cause. Reports against the character of a prominent local preacher were being circulated. I went at once to the brother and told him what I had heard. He said, "That accounts for the way Brother Matthews has seemed to hold me back in the meetings; I will make that all right." That evening just before the close of the meeting this local preacher arose and said, "I hear that it is being reported that I have painted up and sold a rotten old cultivator. Now that cultivator was not mine, but belonged to my son. He came to me and wanted to have some things sold at the auction I had recently, and I gave my consent. I also hear that I am accused of cheating in a deal. Now if it can be shown that I have cheated any one, knowingly, I will give you my best horse. It is also being reported that I have charged an exorbitant rate of

interest, and if that can be proven I will restore four-fold, and remember these are standing offers. I mean to do right and get to heaven." From that time that barrier was removed, and the spirit of the meeting was much better.

I have always practised going directly to an accused party and doing personal work. If a brother or sister is guilty, it will give them a chance to make amends. If they are not guilty they will have an opportunity to take a wise course to justify themselves in all meekness.

The meeting still continued in power and I do not think it had lost in interest when Brother Matthews returned. The Lord can use a Gideon and his three hundred men with their pitchers and lamps, if they will only humble themselves and lap "as a dog lap-peth." And the Lord can use a Samson with the jaw bone of an ass if he will only keep his head out of the lap of Delilah. God help us not to despise the day of small things.

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Once as I was about to hold a revival meeting a man rode up behind me and said, "Are you the man who is expecting to hold revival meetings?" I replied that I was. He said that his house was a home for preachers, and gave me a cordial invitation to visit him. This man came to the meeting and prayed and talked with much enthusiasm. As I was visiting from house to house the next day the people would say, "Are you going to let that old fellow who prayed so long and loud last night, take

part in your meeting? If you do he will spoil everything for he goes to the saloon three times a day and drinks." I also learned that he sometimes got drunk. Before night I had several witnesses to these facts. That night he asked me to go home with him and I accepted his invitation. At the proper time he handed me the Testament and asked me to read and pray. I told him that I had a few things to say to him before reading. He told me to say on. I then told him that I was credibly informed that he went to the saloon regularly three times a day. His excuse was that the doctor had ordered him to drink a certain kind of liquor three times a day, and that he was compelled to do it for a certain disease which troubled him. "But," said I, "I am told that you get tipsy when others treat you." He said that did not often occur. I then told him that his neighbors had no confidence in him. "Why," said he, "I have lectured on temperance, and I am a local preacher, and have held revival meetings and numbers have been converted." I told him the Savior said, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7: 22, 23). I had a struggle with him and he shed some crocodile tears, but I told him that he must either repent and publicly ask his neighbors to forgive him and stop going to the saloon, or he must stop taking part in the meetings

while I was holding them. He said that he must have the liquor or he would be sick. Of course I could not accept that statement and told him so. His gun was spiked. I was permitted to remain over night, but did not receive another invitation from him.

I have related these incidents to show how God honors faithful dealing. The world is filled with that which is shallow and spurious, and the genuine is at a premium. God help us to be faithful and thorough in all of our work for souls. The judgment will soon be here, and we cannot afford to daub with untempered mortar, for "every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is" (1 Cor. 3:13).

CHAPTER XXV.

IT IS now over forty years since the Free Methodist church was raised up. In looking it over as far as I am able to judge it is standing by its colors well, as a whole. We have had able men at the head; men of experience and sound judgment who are well qualified in every way to take the lead. While they have seen the failures and compromisers of many other churches it has helped them to guard every point, so that in framing our Discipline it was made both Methodistic and aggressive; I think the best in all the land. Our general conferences instead of toning down, have drawn the lines still tighter. At first persons were received who used tobacco. We had a hard fight over the dirty practise, but we came out victorious; and now we not only exclude members for using it, but prohibit the raising, manufacturing or selling of it.

On prohibition of the liquor traffic we are nearly a unit. I expect it will be a test of membership soon.

Secret societies are as numerous as the frogs of Egypt. They even get into our kneading troughs, and in some places they even prohibit honest men from getting a day's work so as to make a livelihood

for their families until they have the mark of the beast on them; but we stand head and shoulders above them all.

We stand nearly square on the dress question, and only a few appear to have a desire to be a little "nice" and put on just a little to take off the reproach of following the meek and lowly Jesus. Brother Roberts used to say that when the sap started in the spring, dead leaves would fall off, so when the Spirit has free course through our spiritual veins all signs of pride fall off.

While other church members and preachers plead for sin in their life, we as a church hold that when people are born again they are saved from committing sin, and, in fact, we believe that they even stop sinning when under Bible awakening. I joined the Methodist church sixty-three years ago. At that time the class book had two pages explaining the manner in which it should be marked every Sunday. If a member was marked absent for three successive Sundays he was liable to be dealt with, and he would be expelled if he persisted in staying away without a valid excuse. I have never outgrown my Methodist clothing. It fits a soul well that is in earnest to get to heaven.

We believe in entire holiness, that is, being cleansed from all unrighteousness, according to 1 John 1:9. Justification is a great work and should not be passed over lightly. It means much to get out of the seventh chapter of Romans into the eighth where the soul is free from condemnation.

There is great joy when a soul is truly saved. But John says that we are not only forgiven, but that the blood of Jesus Christ "cleanseth us from all sin." Here are two separate works of grace,—forgiveness and cleansing. When a soul is entirely sanctified it receives the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. The shrink and fear are taken out of the heart and a holy boldness, such as the apostles had on the day of Pentecost, is given us. Then we are fully prepared to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth.

We as a people must hold to these fundamental principles or we will lose our power. Education is good and very important, but the Holy Ghost with real sanctified common sense must be our drive-wheel, or all else will be a failure. I do not put a premium on either ignorance or education. God can use men and women of all classes and grades if they are at his disposal. Burned children dread the fire. I well remember that fifty years ago the ministers of the Methodist church were common, uneducated men, and they worshiped in old schoolhouses and sometimes lived in log parsonages. Then they began to think that they must have educated and talented preachers, large churches, and a good choir, for other churches had them. They started in on that line and then soon resorted to all kinds of church entertainments to support their preachers. Now we shall have to guard this point well or the devil will come in as an angel of light and lead us astray before we are aware of his presence.

I trust that all will earnestly seek the qualifications necessary for soul saving; for that is the real business of the church and its ministers. The early disciples went everywhere preaching the word. Paul said to Timothy in his dying charge, "Preach the word." We must not only believe that the Bible is true, but we must know it to be true by a personal experience. Jesus says if any man will do his will he shall "know of the doctrine." Jesus went everywhere doing good and we must follow his example if we expect to see souls saved, and our work prosper.

In order to make a success it will be necessary to be in earnest and take hold of the work with great courage and faith. Our book of Discipline says, "Begin at the time appointed." There is not much use of scolding the people about being late to meeting, if the preacher sets the example.

It will also be necessary to work under the direction and by the power of the Holy Spirit. These are some of the elements of success in soul saving. God grant that a double portion of the Holy Spirit may rest upon our beloved preachers and people.







