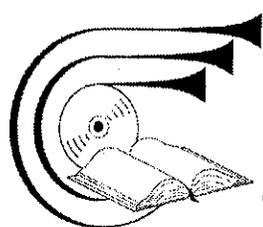


ADVENTIST PIONEER LIBRARY



Lest We Forget

"We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history." LS 196

AN ORDINARY man?

T

he distinctive sounds and smells of Clinton's ditch scarcely penetrated George Amadon's distracted mind. He

couldn't concentrate on his job on the Erie Canal.

Prophecies had been fulfilled that clearly indicated Jesus was coming soon.

Amadon continually reviewed the astonishing news

George Washington Amadon—pioneer SDA publishing worker

by Marlene Steinweg

he and his Mother had heard while visiting his uncle at Clarkson, New York, 20 miles west of Rochester. Elder J. N. Loughborough presented from the Bible what he called "Present Truth." It was an extraordinary, life-changing message.

The sweating horses strained against their harnesses. Bells clanged to warn of approaching barges, laden down with September's abundant fruit. It required decided effort on his part to concentrate on his team of work horses as they towed a barge upstream.

"I must follow my convictions," he decided. "I will be baptized as soon as I can. I want to help others prepare for Jesus' coming."

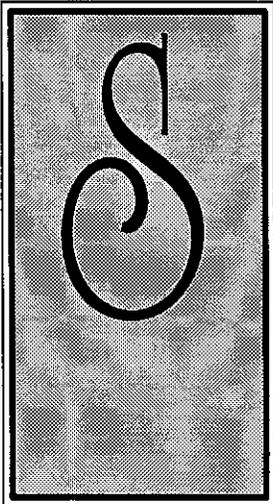
Amadon left his employment on the Erie Canal and joined the Advent Sabbatarians. He was an ordinary man with extraordinary faith and perseverance who dedicated his life to advancing the Present Truth. He was a faithful pioneer in the publishing work, a staunch Sabbath School supporter, and a devoted, Christian husband and father.

continued on page four

AN EXTRAORDINARY L WOMAN

Martha Amadon—true pioneer,
and faithful worker and companion

by Dr. Richard Hammond



Sabbath morning in the spring of my college freshman year at Emmanuel Missionary College (EMC), I was sitting in the north side of the balcony of the church auditorium. Another student was paying homage to a gracious, elderly lady on the front row, who was nearing her 98th birthday. The honored guest was a very special person within the mainstream of historic Adventism—Martha D. Amadon, daughter of John Byington, the first president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. She was attended by her daughter Grace.

EARLY EXPERIENCES

John Byington, a Wesleyan Methodist minister, was an ardent abolitionist in sentiment. His home in Buck's Bridge, New York, became a valued station in the Underground Railway and a haven for politically disadvantaged Blacks and Indians.

Into this log cabin home, situated not many miles from the St. Lawrence River, Martha was born on March 28, 1834.¹

Martha must have experienced the dramatic excitement of seeing run-a-way slaves, those fugitives from injustice who sought shelter under their roof. She certainly could have also been privy to many discussions on this malignant social issue which became a chief provocation of the lamentable Civil War.

Aaron Hilliard, John Byington's neighbor, who observed Sabbath on the seventh day of the week, shared the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* with his preacher friend.² This publication focused heavily on the Sabbath truth. Hilliard soon had a determined convert. Byington accepted the new "light" and kept his first Sabbath, March 20, 1852. Martha, whose aptitude for both learning and teaching had been evident early on, joined her father in this step.

Martha received her education at home, and had very limited formal schooling. Much of her reading was done by candlelight. Following their acceptance of the Advent message, it was quickly arranged to have a church school. Aaron Hilliard offered to convert the parlor in his home into a classroom. In 1853, nineteen year-old Martha became the first teacher in that first sabbatarian advent school.

After about three years, Byington built a small church on his property.³ James and Ellen White, those intrepid pioneers who ever sought to strengthen "the brethren," now visited Buck's Bridge on occasion.

MOVE TO MICHIGAN & MARRIAGE

In response to an appeal by the Whites, John Byington and Martha later trekked to the Wolverine state, where a majority of Sabbath-keeping Adventists resided. By horse and buggy, they visited those small companies

scattered throughout Michigan, bringing fresh hope, renewed courage and confidence in "the message." If an organ was available, Martha would play for their singing.⁴

In 1858 or 1859, following their move to Battle Creek, Martha began working in the Review and Herald office, joining other employees, like George Amadon, who had worked for the "paper" before the office was transferred from Rochester, New York to the little town in Southwest Michigan.

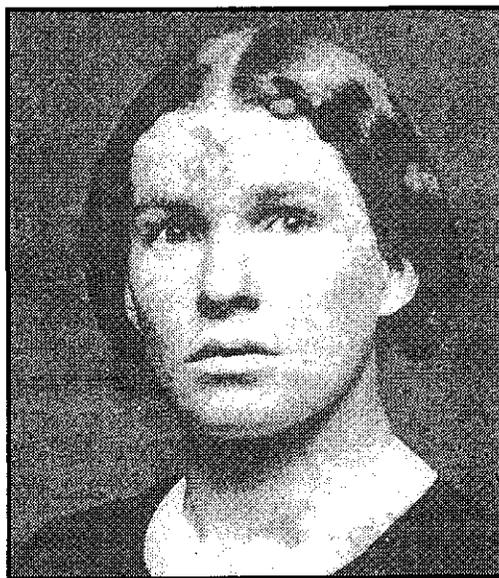
For a time she made her temporary home with James and Ellen White. Her sterling character did not escape the notice of George Amadon, a former student of Oberlin College, who had accepted the "message." Their friendship ripened into courtship, while they worked together on the *Review* and the *Youth's Instructor*. They were married November 24, 1860.

The bride and groom enjoyed the confidence and trust of the Whites, and on occasion were invited to help them deal with specific problems connected with the work. One such instance occurred in 1864. "Wednesday evening I took George Amadon, Martha, and Brother and Sister Myron Cornell, and I read distinctly and emphatically the testimony the Lord had given me [for Moses Hull]." Hull was a valued worker whose faith was eventually undermined by his involvement in spiritualism.⁵

SISTER WHITE'S VISIONS

Martha was present on many occasions when Sister White received "visions." The first time she was privileged to witness this expression of "spiritual gifts" was in the Byington home in 1854 when she at the age of twenty. She remembered the testimony that followed, for it bore on the Sabbath message, and also the future, "great work for Brother Andrews."⁶

George and Martha Amadon were present on one notable occasion, when the Lord gave His messenger special testimonies and counsel. This occurred in 1863, in the home of Aaron Hilliard who lived in Otsego, Michigan at the time, some 30 miles northwest of Battle Creek. James White was not well, and he and Ellen were spending the week-end



in Otsego where a tent effort was being held. During her prayer at Friday evening worship, Mrs. White felt a special concern for her husband, and was soon in vision. This vision, which continued for some 45 minutes, unfolded to her the comprehensive principles of healthful living, which became the charter for health reform and medical missionary outreach.⁷

Martha wrote her impressions and observations. "Mrs. E. G. White was gifted in prayer, her voice clear, her words distinct and ringing, and it was almost always during one of these seasons of prayer that she was taken off. . . . In vision her eyes were opened. There was no breath, but there were graceful movements of the shoulders, arms and hands expressive of what she saw."⁸

OTHER EXPERIENCES

Martha was a gifted poetess. In one poem of lasting merit, "THEN and NOW," the concluding three verses reveal Martha Amadon's hope and motivation:

*Time's sands are almost run; descending sun
Points to fulfilling signs as one by one
They usher in the royal Prince of Peace
Whose reign shall cause all strife and war to cease.*

*To Him, the great I AM. Sovereign of all,
Who hears our cry and marks the sparrow's fall,
Come, let us kneel, bow low before His throne,
And worship, praise, adore Him, Lord alone.*

*The hills may rend, the mountains may remove,
But ne'er His kindness and the gift of love;
The balm of sorrow, grief, and all our fears
The song and science of eternal years.*

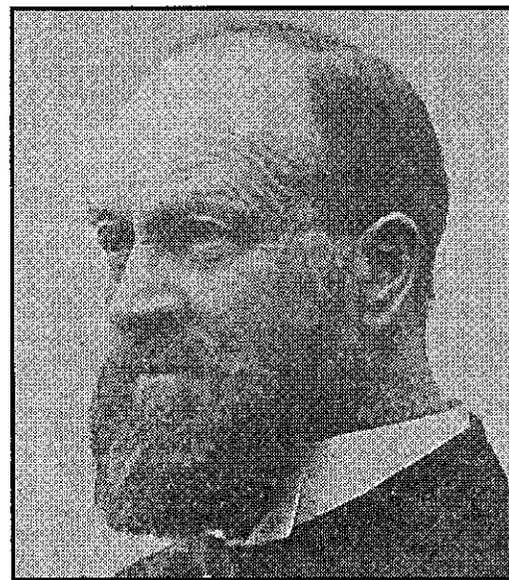
(*Loma Linda Leaflets*, Loma Linda, E. G. White Estate, Branch Office. W. D. F. 4090, p. 378.)

Martha Amadon witnessed nearly every major event that marked the development of this fledgling denomination.

continued on page seven

AN ORDINARY man?

continued from page one



GEORGE WASHINGTON AMADON 1832-1913

G

George Washington Amadon was born in Sandlake, New York, August 30, 1832, just 12 years prior to the Great Disappointment of October 22, 1844. He lived with his grandfather who owned a tavern on the outskirts of Boston. "It was his task to mix his grandfather's toddy every day, but he himself never partook, although frequently urged to do so."¹ Later Amadon attended Oberlin College, southwest of Cleveland, Ohio.

Loughborough reported on Amadon's baptism. George was "a horse driver on the Erie Canal. . . . Of course he had to cease that employment. He wanted to learn to set type, so I presented his case to Brother White. He was accepted. . . and connected with their work. . . ." ² The year was 1853. Amadon was twenty-one years old.

Amadon made it his ". . . first business [was] to please God and be a good printer."³ He worked in the composing room, setting type, preparing the plates for printing. Uriah Smith and Warren Batchellor joined the printing office in Rochester, New York about that time. During October and November of 1855, the publishing office moved to Battle Creek.

The publishing work did not always progress perfectly. Sometimes friction, misunderstandings and resentment arose. For example, when Bro. Batchellor revealed a selfish temperament, Bro. Amadon was too quick to correct him. Ellen White once indicated that Amadon should have "some position where he has not to direct, or have the charge of others."⁴ The men were not perfect; their work was not perfect; but God abundantly blessed the publishing work through the years.

"Abide in Christ," was the title one of his first articles, which appeared on page 53 in the July, 1854 issue of the *Youth's Instructor*. Five years later, he wrote that the purpose of the *Instructor* was, "to place Bible truths in so attractive a form, that multitudes of the dear youth will 'turn away

. . . from . . . vanity,' and fix their affections on the heavenly inheritance."⁵

September, 1854 the first article of many by Martha Byington appeared in the *Youth's Instructor*. Amadon likely knew about her, but didn't meet her until 1855, after the *Review* office moved to Battle Creek. About 1858 Martha began working in the publishing office. She and Brother Amadon learned to love each other while working side by side. Here was an extraordinary woman who Amadon knew would support him in his life's mission. They were married November 24, 1860. Curiously enough, *Instructor* articles with their initials, G.W.A. and M.D.B., were still in the December, 1860 issue. Thereafter, Martha's articles were signed "M.D.A."

The Amadons raised three orphans, John, Ella and Lucretia Cranson; two daughters of their own—Katherine, born March 15, 1866; and Grace, born February 24, 1872—and an adopted son.⁶

In May, 1861, when the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association was incorporated and officers were elected, Amadon was chosen as Vice President. "James White was elected editor of the *Review and Herald*, and G. W. Amadon, editor of the *Youth's Instructor*."⁷ Amadon, acting editor of the *Instructor* since 1858, continued through July, 1864.

Amadon suffered several serious illnesses that could have prematurely ended his life. The first, in 1857 was an infection in his right arm. "Erysipelas . . . had set in. It was usually fatal in those days."⁸ "The inflamed tissue extended the whole length of

the forearm. He appealed to Mrs. White for help and asked for prayer. She met with the brethren and prayed, and his arm was healed."⁹

In 1866 the editor of the *Review* reported Amadon had a severe case of typhoid fever, "brought on by an undue amount of care and labor as foreman of this Office. . . . Had Bro. A. been living as once, this attack would, in all probability have proved fatal."¹⁰ After a confinement of three weeks in bed under the care of the physicians at the sanitarium, Amadon himself testified, "I . . . have taken no drugs into my system to poison my life currents, and so retard my restoration to health. . . . My unprofitable life has been spared, for which I sincerely praise the name of the Lord."¹¹

In August, 1867, Amadon had acute stomach pains, diagnosed as "bilious colic." He threw up his previous day's food and "through the pores of the skin and other channels, matter nearly as yellow as saffron was cast off. The application of baths helped nature do her work well. . . and. . . only the fifth day from his sickness, he [was]. . . as well as ever. . ."¹²

October 2, 1868 Ellen White expressed how difficult it was among Sabbath-keeping people in Battle Creek to advance the health reform cause. "Pride of dress, pride of heart, love of show, love to gratify the appetite, have led to a disregard of the light the Lord permitted to shine upon them."¹³

Excerpts from Amadon's diary written the Spring of 1870 reveal something was amiss. (Diary available in the Heritage Room at the E. G. White Estate, Loma Linda Branch.) Note:

Sabbath, March 12, 1870

"Solemn day for the church. Bro. Butler preached in the morning. Bro. Littljohn preached in the afternoon. Not much of the Spirit. Awful, awful! Business meeting for the church in the evening. Terrible importance.

Sunday, March 13, 1870

"Attended meeting all day. Awful. Solemn. . . . The enemy means to kill me. In the evening made up the paper and got it ready. Worked till nine or ten. Have fasted nearly all day."

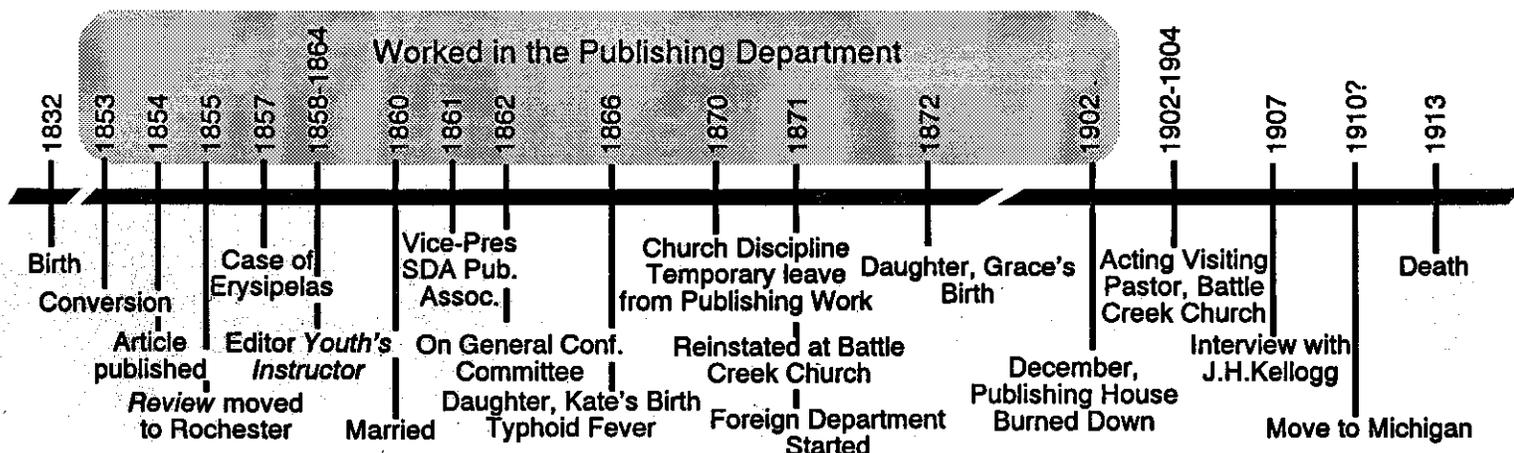
Friday, March 25, 1870

"I am feeling bad, bad, all day. The Lord pity me. I want to be right. I have been wrong and now I feel it most terribly. I believe Satan is determined on my ruin. May the Lord save."

In March he took an indefinite leave of absence from the printing office, rented out their house on Hill Street and the family planned to live with Father Byington, on his farm in Newton. Just before they moved to the farm, Amadon recorded in his diary on Wednesday, April 6, 1870 the drastic disciplinary action taken. All except twelve church members were removed from membership pending "repentance, reform living, and request for readmittance."¹⁴ George and Martha Amadon, and Uriah and Harriet Smith were among the fallen casualties. "George asked to be readmitted the following Sabbath, but was refused."¹⁵

continued on page six

TIME LINE



AN ORDINARY man?

concluded from page five

Though the church members needed to change, Ellen White felt such severe discipline was unnecessary. Instead, she recommended tender treatment and compassion when correcting error in the church.

"George was allowed to join the Battle Creek church again on Sabbath, January 28, 1871; Martha was readmitted the next Sabbath."¹⁶

One of Amadon's special publishing projects was to develop publications in foreign languages. The "foreign department," started in November, 1871, when they sent for German type. By December, the first Danish magazine was nearly completed. By January, 1872, French accents were ordered. "In less than a decade the foreign department had issued fourteen French works, twenty-one... German, thirty-nine... Danish, and twenty-three... Swedish."¹⁷

In 1902, several changes occurred in Amadon's life. First, in December the Review and Herald Publishing plant burned to the ground. Amadon retired, at 70 years of age, after nearly 50 years in the publishing work. He was ordained to the ministry at the age of 72, after acting as visiting pastor of the Battle Creek church for two years.

In 1907, Elders Amadon and A. C. Bordeau made an unfruitful interview to seek reconciliation with Dr. John Harvey Kellogg, who was in trouble with the leaders of the

Church, and in imminent danger of church discipline. Kellogg had worked with Amadon in the Review office between 1864 and 1868 when Kellogg was 12-16 years old. Amadon was his friend and knew how it felt to be misunderstood and disfellowshipped from the church and wanted to help prevent a similar occurrence. But in November, Kellogg was disfellowshipped. Later he obtained control of the Sanitarium. These were both great losses to the Seventh-day Adventist work.

Amadon and his wife later moved to Lake Michigan, near Benton Harbor to live with Grace. During the last 18 months of good health he enjoyed, he helped build up the church in Benton Harbor.

Martha and Grace cared for him tenderly during his final illness. He passed away on February 24, 1913. Amadon was an ordinary man with extraordinary faith and perseverance. He was willing to work hard and to learn from his mistakes. He gave his life to publish the Present Truth to the world. His persevering example demonstrates what God can accomplish through one ordinary, dedicated man. ♦

WRITING FOR THE INSTRUCTOR*

A few remarks might greatly assist those who contribute to the INSTRUCTOR.

1. In general, articles should be *short*. This is a youth's paper and children like short stories. They should not exceed a column. A page and a half of common writing paper, closely written, will make full a column of printed matter.
2. Articles for children should not be of the *sermon style*. A child will listen much more attentively to a moral truth somehow connected with a story rather than dry, theoretical teaching. All articles should be *sprightly* and *attractive*, yet religiously instructive.
3. Never quote more scripture than is strictly necessary to your purpose. The caution of the apostle Paul should be remembered—"Rightly dividing the word of truth."

We kindly appreciate the intentions of our correspondents, and throw out these necessary hints for the good of the INSTRUCTOR. G.W.A.

*Adapted from the *Youth's Instructor*, June, 1860, p. 45.

REFERENCES:

- ¹*Review & Herald [RH]*, July 6, 1944, "George W. Amadon," by Grace Amadon, p. 9.
- ²*RH*, August 1, 1923, "Second Advent Experience" — No. 8, J. N. Loughborough, p. 6.
- ³*RH*, July 6, 1944, p. 9.
- ⁴*Testimony to the Church at Battle Creek*, p. 29, Dec. 10, 1871.
- ⁵*Youth's Instructor*, Jul., 1859, p. 12.
- ⁶See the *RH*, July 6, 1944, p. 9.
- ⁷*RH*, May 28, 1861, p. 446.
- ⁸*Flames Over Battle Creek*, by Milton Raymond Hook, RHPA, 1977, p. 30.
- ⁹*RH*, July 6, 1944, p. 9.
- ^{10, 11}*RH*, Oct. 2, 1866, p. 144.
- ¹²*RH*, August 27, 1867, "Report From Bro. White," p. 172.
- ¹³*Appeal to the Battle Creek Church*, Oct. 2, 1868 letter, p. 71-84.
- ^{14, 15}*Flames Over Battle Creek*, p. 62.
- ¹⁶*Ibid*, p. 63.
- ¹⁷*RH*, July 6, 1944, p. 9.

AN EXTRAORDINARY Woman

concluded from page three

- ♦ Martha Amadon was a charter member of Buck's Bridge Church in New York, and Battle Creek Tabernacle and the St. Joseph Church in Michigan.
- ♦ She was the first president of the first "Dorcas Society." Many a family benefited directly from the "sewing bees" that Martha coordinated.⁹
- ♦ She witnessed the opening of the Western Health Reform Institute in Battle Creek in 1866.
- ♦ She attended the first Seventh-day Adventist campmeeting held in Wright, Michigan in 1868.
- ♦ She was alive when the first SDA overseas missionaries, J. N. Andrews and his children, sailed for Switzerland.
- ♦ She watched with keen interest the construction of our first college, which opened in Battle Creek, in January, 1875.
- ♦ She watched the Review and Herald plant go up in flames in 1902.

LATER YEARS

Martha was a member of the Battle Creek Church from 1859 to 1913, when she and her husband moved to St. Joseph, Michigan. Death claimed him that same year. Later a church was organized there, and she was a charter member. In her later years she often attended Sabbath services at EMC, accompanied by her daughter Grace. It was on one such Sabbath that I saw her.

Little did Martha Amadon think that her life span would exceed her father's by twelve years. While he passed away at the age of ninety, in 1887, she "was nearly 103 years old when she died" in 1935.¹⁰ For over eighty years Martha Amadon grew in lock step with the expanding "progress" of the Advent Movement which now belts the globe with the judgment hour message. ♦

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¹*Review & Herald [RH]*, August 30, 1956.

²*RH*, March 25, 1937.

³*S.D.A. Encyclopedia*, Vol. 10, p. 210.

⁴*They Also Served*, Ava Covington, RHPA, p. 184.

⁵*Ellen G. White, 1862-1876, The Progressive Years*, Arthur L. White, RHPA, p. 57.

^{6,7,8}*RH*, May 18, 1944, p. 123,124.

⁹*S.D.A. Encyclopedia*, Vol. 10, p. 36.

¹⁰*RH*, May 18, 1944.

ENDORSEMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Kenneth Wood, President, Ellen G. White Estate —Because "remembering" is essential to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the words and works of the Adventist pioneers need to be given prominence. We are pleased with the skillful, professional efforts put forth to accomplish this by the Pioneer Library officers and staff. Through books, periodicals and CD-ROM, the messages of the pioneers are being heard, and their influence felt. We trust that the work of the Adventist Pioneer Library will increase and strengthen as earth's final crisis approaches.

C. Mervyn Maxwell, Professor of Church History, SDA Theological Seminary —I certainly appreciate the remarkable contribution you are making to Adventist studies, and I hope you are reaching a wide market. . . . Please do keep up the good work, and may God prosper you.

James R. Nix, Vice Director, Ellen G. White Estate —The service that you and the others associated with the Adventist Pioneer Library project are providing our church is incalculable. To think about so many of the early publications of our pioneers being available on one small disc would have been unthinkable just a few years ago. I spent years collecting shelves full of books in the Heritage Room at Loma Linda University just to equal what is on this one CD-ROM. And now anyone can have access to the same information, and be able to research it in a fraction of the time it would take to look the same thing up in all those original volumes. . . . May God continue to bless you and the others in your very specialized ministry is my prayer. ♦

Words of Wisdom

from Bro. Amadon

“Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another.”

—We are blessed with the knowledge of truth that “breaks every yoke,” and “sets us free,” when we have the same Spirit which in times past indicted it. The ten commandments and faith of Jesus constitute a platform broad enough for all the world to stand upon. (*Review & Herald [RH]*, May 28, 1857, p. 38.)

—“If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him; and we. . . make our abode with him.” This is what I understand by letting the Saviour in. It is by being purged of all dross, and letting our bodies become the temple of the Holy Ghost, and Jesus Christ dwelling there by faith until we behold him “face to face,” and “see him as he is.” When we as a people get in this position, it can truly be said our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. (*RH*, May 28, 1857, p. 38.)

—We are in the very midst of a “crooked and perverse” generation, and we may expect that it will “wax worse and worse” till all the world will go one way—down the broad way to destruction. God grant that in view of these things we may all ask with the Prophet, “Who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?” and from a timely apprehension of coming danger, inseparably unite our dearest interests with God’s cause; seek protection of his Omnipotent arm; then we shall abide the coming day. (*RH*, Oct. 29, 1857, p. 205.)

—My soul trembles when I think how much God’s people fail of coming up to Bible requirements. We live in the time when the prophet says, God shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, Mal. 4:6, and what does this mean except home catechizing and Sabbath-school instruction? I never saw the importance of Bible-Class and Sabbath-School instruction as today, and shall labor on till He that took little children in His arms shall say to all, “Well done, wear the crown.” (*RH*, Aug. 20, 1861, p. 92.)

—Brethren, let us wake up in the cause of God. Let us not sleep as do others. The times are growing perilous. Systems are being undermined, creeds are exploding, thrones are being shaken, men’s hearts are failing them through fear, and soon every man’s work will be tried of what sort it is. The Christian’s hope is immovable; for it is founded on the Bible. It will stand the fiery ordeal just ahead. (*RH*, Sept. 9, 1859, p. 117.)

—How important, how grand the hour in which we live! Creeds are being shaken, systems overturned, thrones totter, governments are distracted, —in short, everything shakes, or soon will be shaken that is not established on God’s immutable truth. . . . It is a time of political as well as religious excitement. The deep pent-up thunders in the distance show the nations are angry. The war cannons begin to rattle, the clash of arms is heard. (*RH*, Aug. 20, 1861, p. 92.) ♦

Lest We Forget

Volume 6

Number 3

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