

The Advent Review

AND SABBATH HERALD.

Volume 38.

ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF S. D. ADVENTISTS.

THE

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS:

A BRIEF SKETCH OF THEIR

ORIGIN, PROGRESS, AND PRINCIPLES.

EDITION OF 1877-8.

OUR field of inquiry leads us back only to the great Advent movement of 1840-44. Respecting that movement it is presumed that the public are more or less informed. They may not be so well aware of the causes which have led since that time to the rise of a class of people calling themselves Seventh-day Adventists.

THE DISAPPOINTMENT.

Adventists looked for the end of the world in 1844, because of the prophecy in Dan. 8:14, which says that at the end of the prophetic period of 2300 days the sanctuary should be cleansed. They computed that time to end in that year. They held that the earth was the sanctuary then to be cleansed, and that its cleansing was to be accomplished with fire which would accompany the manifestation of the Lord from heaven. Hence they supposed the Lord would then come. There were, of course, many other facts and arguments in support of the view that the second coming of Christ was near, but what we have stated was the principal argument for fixing upon that particular time for the occurrence of the event.

The time passed, and the coming of Christ did not take place as was expected. It then became apparent that a mistake had been made in one or both of the following points: either the period of 2300 days did not end at that time, or the cleansing of the sanctuary was not to be the burning of the earth by fire at the second coming of Christ. While there was a possibility of their being mistaken on both these points, a mistake on either one would be sufficient to account for the fact that the Lord did not then appear.

A movement which had enlisted the whole interest of thousands upon thousands, would not of course be abandoned without reflection. The ground was looked over, and two methods adopted for explaining the disappointment. One class jumped to the conclusion at once that they were wrong on time, and the prophetic periods had not ended. Another class, on a careful survey of the whole field, impressed with the strength and harmony of the argument on chronology, saw no ground to change their views upon that point, but became satisfied that the mistake lay in the subject of the sanctuary and its cleansing. This class are the ones now known as Seventh-day Adventists. This brings us to note

THE DIFFERENCE

Between Seventh-day Adventists and First-day or No-day Adventists, as respects chronology. The latter, believing that the prophetic periods were given to make known the time of Christ's coming, and that they have not yet ended, are held to one of two conclusions: either that all that is said in the Bible about these periods is so much of revelation unrevealed, or else that the time of Christ's coming is to be known. The first conclusion, as consistent believers in the Bible, they cannot adopt, and hence their continual efforts to re-adjust the prophetic periods and fix upon the time for Christ to come. From this has arisen in these latter years all the fantastic time-setting which has very properly disgusted the world, and worse than this, has brought reproach on prophetic study. On the other hand,

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS SET NO TIME.

They do not believe that any prophetic period given in the Bible reaches to the coming of Christ, or was designed to mark the day or year of that event. As already mentioned, they believe the chronological argument of the great Advent movement of 1844 was all right, locating the termination of the longest prophetic period, the 2300 days, in the autumn of that year. The prophecy said that then the sanctuary should be cleansed. That sanctuary they found to be, not the earth, which is never so called, but the sanctuary of which Paul so fully and definitely treats in his epistle to the Hebrews, "the sanctuary" and "true tabernacle" in Heaven, "which the Lord pitched and not man," of which Christ, our great High Priest, is minister while "on the throne of the Majesty in the Heavens." Heb. 8:1, 2. The

tabernacle erected by Moses in the wilderness of Sinai about 1500 years before Christ, Ex. 25 and onward, which was the sanctuary of the first covenant, Heb. 9:1, from that time till the first advent, was a type, figure, or pattern of this heavenly sanctuary of the new covenant. Heb. 9:9, 23, 24. The ministration of the sanctuary consisted of two grand divisions, which were accomplished every year; the daily ministration, and a brief service in the most holy place, or second apartment of the sanctuary, which completed the yearly round of service. This latter work was called the cleansing of the sanctuary, and was performed by the priest. So likewise the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary, Heb. 9:23, must be performed by Christ while yet a priest, before he takes his kingdom and appears in his glory.

The view we take of the prophecy, consequently, is that the termination of the 2300 days in 1844 brought us to the commencement of this last portion of Christ's work as priest in the true tabernacle above, called the cleansing of the sanctuary; not a cleansing from physical impurities, but from the presence of our sins, imparted to it through the blood of Christ there ministered in our behalf. This explains at once the mistake in 1844, and shows our present position. We are now in the time of the cleansing of the sanctuary; a period of brief but indefinite duration, reaching to Christ's coming.

While, therefore, we do not throw away the prophetic periods, but believe they are to be understood, we believe also that they have been correctly interpreted, and have all terminated; so that now we have no data from which to reason respecting a definite time for the Lord to come.

THE SEVENTH DAY.

Two causes have operated to introduce the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath among Adventists, and thus to develop that class known as Seventh-day Adventists.

First, a Seventh-day Baptist sister, Mrs. Rachel D. Preston, from the State of New York, moved to Washington, N. H., where there was a church of Adventists. From them she received the doctrine of the soon-coming of Christ, and in return instructed them in reference to the claims of the fourth commandment of the decalogue. This was in 1844. Nearly that whole church immediately commenced the observance of the seventh day, and thus have the honor of being the first Seventh-day Adventist church in America. The ravages of death, and removals from the place, have considerably diminished their numbers; but the church there still lives to bear witness to the truth thus introduced among them.

The Sabbath question began immediately to be agitated among Adventists, and within a few months, many from their ranks commenced its observance. Among the earliest permanent converts to this doctrine, three deserve especial mention: 1. Eld. Joseph Bates, who with great zeal, devotion, and self-sacrifice, gave himself to its advocacy, and brought many to its observance. He fell asleep March 19, 1872, in the 80th year of his age. 2. Eld. James White, the founder and manager, to the present time, of the S. D. Adventist publishing work, and now president of their five leading organizations; namely, The General Conference, The Publishing Association, The Health Reform Institute, the General Tract and Missionary Society, and the Educational Society. 3. Eld. J. N. Andrews, author of the "History of the Sabbath," the "Sanctuary," the "Three Messages," and other important works, and now absent as a missionary to Switzerland in Europe.

Secondly, another cause which has tended to strengthen them in the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is the subject of the sanctuary, to which we have already alluded. It was seen at once that the central object in the sanctuary, in whichever dispensation we view it, is the ark of God, which was enshrined in the most holy place. This ark was prepared expressly as a receptacle for the tables of stone on which were written the great moral precepts of God's government, the ten commandments. Thus attention was called to the law of God. It was also seen that if the law in the ark of the heavenly sanctuary, Rev. 11:19, is the great original, and that deposited in the typical sanctuary was only a copy, or transcript, that law must read the same now as it read then, and the idea of any change is placed beyond the range of possibilities; that heaven and earth, as Christ in his first sermon declared, would sooner pass than one jot or tittle would pass from the law; and that the fourth commandment requires of the second house of Israel what it required of the first, and has required from Eden down, the observance of the seventh day of the week as the grand and glorious memorial of our creation at the hands of God.

THEIR PUBLISHING WORK.

This, as already stated, originated through the instrumentality of Eld. James White. Eld. W. was born in Palmyra, Me., in 1821. Commencing at the age of twenty, he labored with much success as a public speaker in the great Advent movement of 1840-44, and when the claims of the Sabbath were brought to his notice, he entered as heartily into the work of its defense and promulgation. He began the work of publishing in 1849. In November, 1850, he commenced the publication of the ADVENT REVIEW AND SABBATH HERALD, the organ of the S. D. Adventists.

To accommodate his publishing work to the field of his operations as a traveling evangelist, the paper was issued first at Paris, Me., till June, 1851, then at Saratoga Springs, N. Y., till March, 1852. It was then removed to Rochester, N. Y., where it continued nearly four years. Then the cause of Sabbath reform rapidly advancing westward, its present location, Battle Creek, Mich., was selected as a more central position, and the paper was moved to this place in November, 1855. Up to this time Eld. White was publisher and sole editor. Some of the time since then, others have been associated with him on the editorial board.

The wants of the cause demanding an enlargement of operations, and the employment of more capital in the publishing business, an Act of the Legislature of Michigan, for the Incorporation of Associations for Publishing Purposes, was secured and approved March 7, 1861. Under that Act a legally incorporated Association, under the name of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, was organized in Battle Creek, May 3, 1861. They immediately erected a two-story brick building in the form of a Greek cross, the main portion 26x66, the transverse section 26x44, for the publishing work. In 1871 a second building of the same size and form was erected to meet the necessities of the increasing business. And in 1873 a third building of the same kind was built for the same reason. These all stand, side by side, opposite the public square at the corner of Main and Washington Streets. In the last-named building is located the bindery, furnished with improved modern machinery for the manufacture of blank books and all branches and varieties of book-binding.

The different periodicals issued by the Association, the titles of which are given below, have an aggregate monthly circulation of about 40,000 copies.

THE ADVENT REVIEW AND SABBATH HERALD, weekly.

YOUTH'S INSTRUCTOR, monthly.

HEALTH REFORMER, monthly.

ADVENT TIDENDE, Danish, monthly.

ADVENT HAROLD, Swedish, monthly.

COLLEGE RECORD, quarterly.

Books on the prophecies and other Bible subjects have been issued largely from the beginning, and have now reached an aggregate of about two hundred millions of pages.

Sixty-six hands are regularly employed in the work, and the capital invested is over one hundred thousand dollars.

These results, wrought out in so short a time, are the only compliment that need be paid to him under whose management this degree of prosperity has been attained. Those acquainted with the business career of Eld. White have observed two strongly developed traits of character; zeal to push forward in the formation and execution of plans for the advancement of the work, and caution to avoid injudicious and reckless ventures. The union of these two qualities, regulating at once the amount of steam and the application of brakes, has made him the master of the situation in the publishing line, and has given to the enterprise, though moving forward rapidly, a healthy and permanent growth.

NUMBERS.

They now number 478 churches, with an enrollment of about 11,708 members. But owing to the scattered condition of this people, a large proportion of them are not so situated as to belong to any of the church organizations, single families being scattered all the way from Maine to California and Oregon, in all the Northern States, and in many of the Southern. The whole number is estimated at from twenty-five to thirty thousand. The number of ordained ministers is 106, and licentates, 97. None of the churches have pastors stationed with them. They maintain their worship without the aid of a preacher, only as one may occasionally visit them, leaving the ministers free to devote almost their whole time to carrying these views to those who have never heard upon them. During the summer months they carry forward their work by means of large

(Continued on 3d Page of Cover.)

tents 40 to 60 feet in diameter. About fifty of these have been in use the past season (1877).

S. D. Adventists now have sixteen State Conferences as follows: Maine, New England (including in this division only New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut), Vermont, New York and Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Nebraska, Missouri, Kentucky and Tennessee, Kansas, California, and Oregon.

The next outward sweep from the State Conferences is the General Conference. This is composed of delegates, ministers or laymen, from all the State Conferences. This Conference also annually elects its executive committee of three, to have charge of the doings of the denomination in all parts of the field. The president of the General Conference is the highest officer in the body. The object of the General Conference is to unify the work in all localities, equalize labor, and supply destitute fields with help. The meeting of the General Conference held in Lansing, Mich., Sept. 20, 1877, was its sixteenth annual session.

THE HEALTH REFORM.

The attention of S. D. Adventists was called to the subject of Christian Temperance by the writings of Mrs. E. G. White, wife of Eld. James White, about the year 1862. The importance of this subject was at once seen and confessed from the well-ascertained and now generally acknowledged connection between the body and the mind. A person's moral and physical nature is largely affected by his physical condition. It was therefore seen that success in appealing to man's higher and spiritual nature is much more certain if he can be turned from wrong habits of life, which undermine the physical, and benumb the moral powers. In this sense the health reform lies at the foundation of all reform.

The system, as at present advocated and practiced among this people, banishes the use of tobacco in any and all of its forms, none addicted to its use being received into the churches except upon the promise and expectation of its immediate abandonment. The result is that, as a denomination, the sight and scent of tobacco is not found among this people. It excludes from the dietary, pork, tea, and coffee. Rich and highly seasoned food is discarded. Grease and spices take a back seat in the culinary department. Meat of any kind is but rarely used. Two meals only a day are considered preferable for most people, those to be composed of grains, fruits, and vegetables, served up, however, in any of the great variety of their palatable forms.

But the health reform embraces not only right methods of living, but the right means of recovery from sickness. Being impressed with the great evils of the drug system, the friends of this movement felt so great an interest in the matter that steps were taken in 1866 for the establishment of an Institute, to which persons might resort, not only to learn more fully the principles of the hygienic system, but also for the recovery of health. A high and beautiful site of eight acres, about sixty rods north of the publishing buildings in Battle Creek, was purchased, buildings were added to those already on the ground, and the "HEALTH REFORM INSTITUTE" was opened for the reception of patients and boarders, Sept. 5, 1866.

An act of the Michigan Legislature was procured, and a legally incorporated Association was formed April 6, 1867.

A subscription of twenty-six thousand dollars was raised, which has since increased by additional subscriptions and the workings of the institution to about forty thousand.

Increasing patronage demanding more facilities, a mammoth building is now in process of erection, 150x137 feet, four stories in height above the basement. It is provided with an elevator, and all modern improvements for the convenience and comfort of patients. It is heated with steam and lighted with gas. The cost will not fall much short of ninety thousand dollars. The dedication of the building will take place within a few weeks of the present writing, or about the first of March, 1878.

The HEALTH REFORMER, published in the interest of this institution, and in advocacy of health reform principles, was started in August, 1866. It has now attained the largest circulation of any health journal in America.

The Health Reform Institute, though founded and managed by S. D. Adventists, is not conducted on a denominational basis. All believers in the Bible, to whatever denomination they belong, are made equally welcome, and made to feel equally at home, their religious belief being in no way interfered with.

Excepting only the grosser indulgence of tobacco-using, the principles of the health reform are

not regarded as determining the question of church fellowship. It is recommended as that without which it is impossible to secure the best condition of bodily health; and it is supposed that all who are conscientiously endeavoring to serve God, desiring to glorify him not only in their spirits, but in their bodies, which are equally his, will, for this reason, adopt and live out its principles.

MISSIONARY OPERATIONS.

Public speakers being few, in comparison with the calls for labor, a plan has been devised designed to give all an opportunity to act some part in the promulgation of our views. This organization is called the Tract and Missionary Society.

In this organization, the State is divided into districts, each district being composed of a certain number of churches, adjacent to each other. For each district a director is appointed, who appoints a librarian for each church in his district, to take charge of distributing tracts to the members, and a district secretary to keep an account of the whole working of the district. The district directors, a president, secretary, and treasurer, constitute the officers of each State T. & M. Society. This society has now been organized in each of the sixteen State Conferences.

These State Societies then unite and form a General Tract and Missionary Society, with its proper officers.

The object of this organization is to systematically canvass the country with books, tracts, and pamphlets, setting forth the things we hold to be special truths for this time, to obtain subscribers for our various periodicals, visit the sick, call upon, and converse and pray with, families and individuals; and the general organization is designed to seek out openings and supply calls for help, in all the world.

This Tract and Missionary organization is quite recent, the present year, 1878, being only the fifth year with most of the State Societies. Yet the funds raised for the work of this Society now amount to over one hundred thousand dollars, and during the past year reports show that between three and four millions of pages of reading matter have been distributed, mostly given away, thousands of bound volumes placed in public libraries, nearly ten thousand families visited and prayed with, while publications have been sent to England, Scotland, Ireland, Italy, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Australia, New Zealand, and to every missionary station on the coast of Africa.

IN OTHER TONGUES.

Missions are now in successful operation among the Danes, Norwegians, Swedes, and French, in this country. The Danish and Swedish papers have already been noticed. Our full catalogue of the publications issued at this Office, now embraces twenty-one different works in Danish, fifteen in Swedish, thirteen in French, thirteen in German, and one in the Holland language, besides the two monthlies in the Danish and Swedish languages. A good beginning is thus made in the occupation of the field assigned to this message, which is to go to "many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings."

Our views have also gained a permanent foothold in Switzerland in Europe. There are now some two hundred believers there. Two of their number have been sent to this country to learn the English language, and become more fully instructed in S. D. Adventist views. Sept. 15, 1874, Eld. J. N. Andrews left this country for that field of labor. Dec. 25, 1875, Eld. D. T. Bourdeau left his work in America to join Eld. Andrews in the European mission field, where he arrived Jan. 7, 1876. Nov. 17, 1877, three others went from America to assist Eld. Andrews in the work in Europe, arriving in December following.

Eld. J. Ertzenberger, one of the two referred to as having visited this country, is now laboring successfully in Germany, where there is now a body of Sabbath-keepers numbering about the same as that in Switzerland.

Sabbath-keepers have also been discovered in Holland, Hungary, and Russia.

In July, 1876, the publication of a paper in French was commenced at Basel, Switzerland. The paper, called LES SIGNES DES TEMPS, is of the same size as the REVIEW, and is issued monthly. A paper in German is contemplated.

CAMP-MEETINGS.

The first camp-meeting of S. D. Adventists was held, under the management of Elds. White and Andrews, in the town of Wright, Mich., Sept. 1-7, 1868. The results of this meeting were so encouraging that the plan of holding meetings of this kind during the summer months was soon generally adopted among this people. The past season two camp-meetings each were held in the Confer-

ences of New York, Iowa, Missouri, and California, and one each in ten other Conferences, making eighteen in all. At the Michigan meeting, held in Lansing, Mich., Sept. 18 to Oct. 1, there were one hundred and forty tents, and, including all who were present during some portion of the meeting, about two thousand persons permanently encamped on the ground. Others lodging away from the ground, but daily attending the meeting, swelled the number in daily attendance to nearly or quite twenty-five hundred. This was the largest company of Christian observers of the seventh day known to have assembled since apostolic times.

These meetings, as conducted by S. D. Adventists, are designed to be occasions of great spiritual profit to all who attend, promoting a revival spirit, and deep and vital piety. Complete order is maintained, proper hours for rest are secured, and everything passes off with as much order and decorum as would be observed in a house of worship.

The mammoth Michigan tent, 80x120 feet, was pitched at the Lansing meeting above referred to. A similar tent, 80x125 feet, owned by the New England Conference, was erected at the camp-meeting in Groveland, Mass.

Full reports of all the meetings have been published in over one hundred leading papers in all parts of the country.

THE PACIFIC COAST.

In 1868, Elds. J. N. Loughborough and D. T. Bourdeau were sent by the General Conference on a mission to California, and, with a large tent taken with them, commenced the work. From this point the cause of Seventh-day Adventism has grown quite rapidly on that coast. In 1872, Eld. White and wife visited that State, and aided in organizing a State Conference. They again visited California in the latter part of 1873, remaining until August, 1874. On this last visit, perceiving that the growing cause in that distant locality needed a medium of communication nearer than the publishing house in Michigan, Eld. W. commenced in Oakland, Cal., the publication of THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the first number of which was issued June 4, 1874. It was started as a weekly the same size as the REVIEW AND HERALD. The wants of the cause, and the action of the General Conference of Aug. 10, 1874, calling Bro. W. east, the California Conference assumed the publication of the SIGNS. At their camp-meeting at Yountville, Oct. 1-12, 1874, nineteen thousand dollars were pledged for this purpose, and since paid.

April 5, 1875, an Association, called the Pacific Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, was incorporated, to carry forward the publishing work there. The SIGNS is already attaining a large circulation.

As indicating the progress of the cause in California, it may be stated that, at the two camp-meetings held this season, there were one hundred and twenty-two tents pitched, and six hundred and seventy-five Sabbath-keepers were upon the ground. The churches belonging to this Conference now number nineteen.

A new Conference, composed of Oregon and Washington Territory, has just been organized.

THE EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY.

The subject of education among S. D. Adventists, and the founding of a denominational school, was brought to the attention of this people by Eld. James White and wife, in the early part of 1872, and several meetings at their call were held in Battle Creek, Mich. May 11, 1872, the matter was put into the hands of the General Conference Committee, who, during the summer and autumn of 1873, solicited subscriptions to this enterprise, obtaining pledges for over fifty-four thousand dollars.

March 16, 1874, an Association was formed, under the law of Michigan "for the incorporation of institutions of learning," and ground was broken, in May, for the erection of a suitable school building. The site is a beautiful plot of twelve acres, in the highest part of the city, opposite the grounds of the Health Institute. The building, of brick, 37x71, with two hall wings, each 17x37, three stories high, capable of accommodating between four and five hundred students, was opened for use Jan. 4, 1875.

The school itself had been in progress, in such accommodations as it could secure, for some two years before.

The first annual catalogue, issued in 1875, showed an aggregate attendance during the year of 289; the second, issued in 1876, showed an attendance the preceding year of 267. The number now attending is between three and four hundred.

CIRCULATED BY THE

Tract and Missionary Society

— OF THE —

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THE TRACT AND MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

THIS Society was organized under the direction of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, convened at Battle Creek, Mich., Aug. 13, 1874.

The object of this organization was to secure an extensive and systematic distribution of moral and religious literature in the various civilized countries; by means of public libraries, reading rooms, first-class steamers and vessels visiting various ports in this and other countries, etc. These have received large donations from this society. It also, in common with all other societies of like character, embraces all benevolent and missionary efforts.

The society being young, its membership is rapidly increasing, the present number of members being not less

than eight thousand. Publications to the amount of about seventeen million pages are distributed annually, also a correspondingly large amount of other missionary labor is performed by this society.

Large deposits of publications have been placed under the direction of agents (see list of branch offices given above), of whom publications can be obtained in the English, French, German, Italian, Danish, and Swedish, languages at any time. Also, active agents are distributed through most of the Southern States, the territories, and at various points in the Old World where organizations have not yet been effected. Correspondence is solicited with those wishing further information.