

HISTORY

Twenty-Five Years' Four-Fold Gospel Work

IN

TROY, N. Y.

AS GIVEN BY

SARA M. C. MUSGROVE

ON THE

Twenty-Fifth Anniversary

APRIL 12, 1908

HISTORY OF TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

Four-Fold Gospel Work in Troy. Given by Sara M. C. Musgrove, on the 25th Anniversary, April 12, 1908.

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, said the Lord." Zech. 4: 6.

"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. * * That no flesh should glory in His presence." I Cor. 1:27, 29.

January 28, 1882, while in a Home for Incurables in Brooklyn, NY., from which it was not expected I would ever come out alive, the Lord raised me up from a four and a half years' illness.

Before the healing was bestowed, we answered "Yes, Lord," to the question "Will you go forth as I may lead, in my service, relying only upon me to supply all your need, and to meet the expenses of the work, to which I may call you?"

For several months after being healed the Lord led us to study the Word with the Holy Spirit as our only Teacher. Then step by step He led us forth in service, wonderfully and in unthought-of ways supplying all need.

Before leaving the Home, a lady who was a skeptic, and a stranger to us, only as we had sought to lead her into the light, put into our hands \$100 with which to meet expenses in some quiet

boarding place for the summer. Thus the Lord opened tile way for us to spend several weeks in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, where we first presented the Truth concerning Christ as Savior, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming Lord, both by personal work and by parlor meetings, with some precious fruit to His glory.

In the autumn of 1882 we returned to Troy, where we had labored as the missionary of the Second Street Presbyterian church several years previous to the long illness.

During the winter labored much in the Grace M. E. church, and out among the people; also visiting the jail every week.

In March 1883, E. O. Allen, whom the Lord used as an instrument in my healing, spent several days in Troy, and with him we visited and prayed with a number of sick ones.

At this time the Lord healed W. D. Sterry, who was then at death's door. Then quickly followed the healing of the Rev. Mr. Fallon of cancer.

Soon after, in response to urgent requests of the people, we gave Bible readings on the subject of Divine Healing, first in the parsonage of Grace M. E. church, then in the Sunday-school room.

In the spring of 1883 the Lord led us to rent a small flat in President Street, in order to present there the Four-Fold Gospel.

The rent was \$8.00 per month. There was remaining from the \$100.00, previously referred to, sufficient to pay one month's rent in advance, a little for food and about 5.00 to expend for

furnishings. For future personal needs, and means to carry on the work, we took the Lord as our *Banker*, having received this promise, "Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land and verily thou shalt be fed."

That promise has never failed. Believing that the Lord desired honesty in the sight of all men we asked Him as a token, that he would provide the money in advance as long as he desired us to rent. To His glory can we say never once did He fail to do this during the thirteen years that we rented. Neither has He ever permitted us to fail to meet our obligations since we purchased the Four-Fold Gospel Home.

A Thursday afternoon meeting was the beginning of the work in the rented rooms.

Before the year closed, however, at the request of the people, the meeting was changed from Thursday afternoon to evening, and the attendance thereby increased from six or eight to fifteen or twenty.

In the autumn of the same year, 1883, the Lord led us to have a Sunday afternoon meeting for Bible Readings. The first few were given by Wm. G. Carr, of precious memory. When he could no longer give his services, the Lord clearly led us to continue these Sunday afternoon Bible Readings.

In May 1884, we moved to Glen Avenue. Here was an increase of \$2.00 per month rent, more rooms to be furnished, expenses for light and heat much increased.

To the praise of the Lord let it be said, He here wrought wonderfully in providing furnishings and

in meeting all increased expenses, regarding which we might give many interesting incidents proving that His watchful eye anticipated every need, and could choose his own instruments, sometimes very strange ones, in meeting the same.

We remained on Glen Avenue two years, during which the Thursday evening and Sunday afternoon meetings were continued with occasional extra services in the Home. We also responded frequently to invitations to give Bible readings outside the Home and continued to visit the jail weekly.

During three years there was a change of pastors in Grace M. E. church and we experienced opposition from the present pastor, though continuing at his request to render him much assistance.

But God upheld and still led us forward in His work giving blessed fruit to His glory.

In 1885 we commenced meetings for Bible readings at the residence of Mrs. Sarah Gaston, Upper Troy, which we continued for two years. Then, as our labors had much increased, we left these meetings in charge of others who had been in attendance and were well qualified to lead them and to give Bible readings. These meetings were continued for twelve or thirteen years.

In May, 1886, as the home we occupied was to be sold, we were obliged to move again.

The only suitable place found was at the corner of 3rd Avenue and 5th Street, in Upper Troy, again at an advance rent of \$2.00 per month. During the two years previous we had just sufficient income from the freewill offerings of the

people to meet the \$10.00 per month, and now to pay \$12.00 required another step of faith, and testings we had for several months, although on the days that rent was due, the money was always in hand sufficient to pay. Yet means for other needful things were very limited. Bread and water, however, were always sure as promised.

When the Lord saw we had been sufficiently tested, he led a dear sister who knew nothing of this to pay that difference of two dollars per month of the rent.

Before the first year on Third Ave. closed our work had so increased that the Lord led us to give up the weekly jail work.

During the year 1887 we held many extra meetings, Elder W. G. Raymond then assisted us, and baptized several in the Hudson River. Since then we have had baptismal services as candidates have presented themselves.

That year (1857) a good number were saved and healed, twenty-three of whom were baptized in the Hudson.

The Lord's Supper was first administered in connection with the work, after, the first baptismal service and has ever since been observed monthly.

During this year also the Sunday afternoon prayer and testimony meeting after the Bible reading was commenced, and has continued to the present time.

The position I took regarding baptism and Lord's Supper was the occasion of intense opposition from the church to which I belonged. In a long conversation with the pastor we took up step

by step the course we had pursued, and proved to him, as he himself acknowledge, that all was in accordance with God's Word, but, said he, "the church considers it irregular." He desired another interview, but the Lord led me to ask for my letter and to be no longer trammled by the church in what I believed to be God-directed service. The letter was granted me July 27, 1887.

Up to this time, I had done all my own housework as well as the other work, and now frequently had guests.

After the Lord wonderfully healed Mrs. Percival she was led to offer her services in the Home as a thank-offering to the Lord and was a great help during the years 1888 and 1889.

In May 1888, it was again necessary to move. The only suitable house found was \$17.00 per month, instead of \$12.00, as we had been paying. This was 42 Fifth Ave. When ready to take this step of faith, one party said "I will pay \$5.00 per month for one year, if you decide to take that house," which promise he kept.

Again the Lord provided in ways unthought-of much extra furnishings and met other increased expenses.

Until a short time before this move, we never had even a free-will offering box, and money was never mentioned at any service. Then a brother came forward saying he believed the Lord led him to put an offering box in the hall. We answered "If the Lord so lead, do it," and he acted accordingly.

We remained at 42 Fifth Avenue eight years until April, 1896, during which time the Lord con-

tinued to lead, enlarging the field, with plenty of testings and trials thrown in, thus continually reminding us that our dependence was still in God, and not man. During those eight years fifty-four were baptized.

In 1889, a Christian Alliance Missionary Society was organized, holding meetings at first Saturday evening only; but as interest in the Missionary cause increased, the time was changed to Sunday afternoon, at which time they have since been held, monthly.

Mrs. Percival fell asleep in Jesus March 1890, and we were left again without a helper. To supply this need, we looked to the Lord. He sent us a woman, who for a time helped much, not only in the work, but in exercising our patience, forbearance and long-suffering. She proved to be a morphine fiend, and we were obliged to send her away April 1891.

At this time, we asked the Lord to send us a sincere Christian woman as helper, and May 6, 1891, He surely granted the request by sending Mrs. H. Post, whom I had never seen but once before. Since then she has labored all these seventeen years, truly, in the Lord; more self-denying than many know. She had been commanding a good salary, which could have continued, but she has labored these years without wages, taking the Lord as her inheritance. She will have her reward "in that day."

During the year 1891 we gave a course of Bible readings in Miss Haswell's rooms in Troy, also in Pittsfield, Massachusetts.

July 20, 1891, we commenced to hold Sunday morning meetings for the study of Revelation, which, with the book of Daniel, was continued several years.

Monday evening Cottage Meetings were commenced in 1891 and continue to the present time. Through these meetings the Four-Fold Gospel has been carried to and received by many who otherwise would not have heard it.

Sunday school was started in 1891 with twelve scholars and three teachers. Our present membership, including officers, is ninety-three.

In January, 1892, while at 42 Fifth Avenue, Sister Post had become much worn out by the arduous and increased labors, necessitating more help, and the Lord then led Sister H. Carpenter to come, whose faithful services have since been given, and in ways known only to the Lord and us, she, with Sister Post, has helped lift the burdens. The Lord will reward them openly "in that day."

Systematic Bible study has been conducted one evening in the week since 1893, (fifteen years) except during the summer months.

In 1887 the Lord gave unmistakable tokens, as well as the Spirit's inward assurance, that He would give us a house for His work.

From time to time thereafter He placed in our hands, for this purpose some funds, some, as a (special token of God's will) coming in answer to prayer, by the payment of some old debts of many years, standing, really outlawed, as far as human law was concerned, but not according to God's law.

During the eight years at 42 Fifth Avenue

more and more the necessity was felt of a house more adapted to the work than any hired one could be—a house entirely under our own control. The Sundays school was really crowding us out. The classes occupying parlors, dining room, kitchen and bed rooms.

The parlors were no longer large enough for All Day Meetings and other special occasions and every Sunday were uncomfortably crowded. One day we said, "Nine years since this promise of a house was given!" O, Lord, when wilt thou fulfill it?" He answered, "When you just as boldly take the step of faith in this matter as thirteen years ago you did for your own support and means to carry on the work"

That hour we promised the Lord we would step forward as He should lead the way in this matter. Soon after, He led us to purchase 3337 6th Ave. a roadhouse and saloon (the proprietor having died) for \$4,500. We paid down \$500, borrowed of the Building Loan Association \$4,000.00, giving for that amount a mortgage, then expended \$1,200.00 in remodeling and putting the house in order for services and house. This house was dedicated to the Lord April 19, 1896, on which occasion the chapel and adjoining rooms were crowded to overflowing.

Since occupying this house eighty have been baptized, making in all one hundred and fifty-seven since 1887.

For twenty-three years the Book and Tract Department has been an important agency in spreading the Truth.

In this report we do not present statistics of the number of souls saved, believers led into the fullness and bodies healed by the Lord. He keeps the record and will "in that day" open the books and reveal even the secret things. We know the "good seed" has been sown, and that God's promise holds good "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed shall doubtless come again with rejoicing bringing his sheaves with him."

The Lord has honored us by enabling us to stand these years often in the midst of opposition and sometimes even fierce persecution. He has encouraged our hearts from time to time by letting us see some precious fruit, and we know that many who have here been taught in the Word are now doing Christian work not only in Troy, but in other fields, some as missionaries, both home and foreign. A number of Gospel missions are, we believe, the fruit of this work.

The labors of this people, with the leader, have not been confined by any means to this little Chapel, as some might think. As doors of opportunity have opened they have been entered for the ministry of the Truth, as it is in Christ Jesus. In some cases a course of Bible readings has been given weekly, extending over months. Many among us have frequently entered open doors, conducting public services, and have also been faithful in personal work out among the people and in their places of business. Twenty-four attendants at the chapel have, during the past year, conducted services here and elsewhere.

In March 1898, our Missionary society re-

organized as an independent Four-Fold Gospel Missionary society, which now has eighty-four members. Contributions have been sent to many different Mission Fields, both home and foreign. In 1907, although the financial pressure was great, this Missionary society raised \$326.06.

In 1901, a Friends of Israel Union was combined with the Four-Fold Gospel Missionary society in affiliation with the New Covenant Mission, Pittsburg, Pennsylvania of which Maurice Ruben is superintendent. Since that time considerable attention has been paid to Jewish work and much literature on Jewish subjects distributed among Jews and Gentiles; a special effort put forth to present to the Jews Christ as their Messiah and the Lord has blessed in this ministry.

Maurice Ruben has several times visited Troy and rendered valuable service in connection with this little branch of his work.

Mark Levy of London, England, has also addressed our people and visited Jews in Troy.

God's command is "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem," "Keep not silence and give Him no rest till He establish and till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth."

In August 1901, we were incorporated under the Laws of the State as the Four-Fold Gospel society, with a Board of seven Trustees and five charter members.

In 1903, having found the seating capacity of the Chapel inadequate, and also realizing the need of a baptistry for the use of which we had previously been dependent upon the kindness of

neighboring churches, it was decided to enlarge and remodel the building, and put in the baptistry. This was accordingly accomplished as the Lord led, and the enlarged building was dedicated Sept. 27, 1903, in connection with which a three days' convention was held with great blessing.

The Home Department, especially since this enlargement, has been a very important adjunct of the work to an extent, which could not have been but for the faithful, efficient and self-sacrificing labors of Mrs. Post and Miss Carpenter.

There have been entertained in the Home one hundred and fourteen Christian Workers, thirty-five of whom were foreign missionaries, besides many others who came for special help in the study of the Word, or for Spiritual or physical up-building in the Lord. Thirteen of these Christian workers are of precious memory, having fallen asleep in Jesus; four of whom, namely: —Brother Jeffrey, Brother LeLacheur, Brother Macomber, and Brother Walbrook, laid down their lives in foreign fields. The other Christian workers, who have fallen asleep are: -- Miss Case, Mrs. Dr. Robin, Mary Waterman, Maria Merrill, Sarah Bicknell, Mary Goldsmith, W. R. Raymond, E. O. Allen, and Dr. Wilson.

All these passed away triumphantly, the departures of some seeming more like a translation than like death.

In September 1904, the Sunday evening services were commenced under the leadership of H. M. Moore. Up to the time he entered a new field of labor, in 1906, he and Samuel Tomlinson conducted most of the services. Since then Mr.

Tomlinson has conducted most of the services. Quite recently the young people are giving Gospel messages in these meetings. They have for many years past had charge of the greater number of the Monday evening services, in which the Lord has blessed them, as well as others through their ministry, as they have held up the perfect Savior.

It is with feelings of tenderness and love that we express our gratitude to those who have stood faithfully with us as "workers together with God" and by their players in this little corner of His vineyard, for the past quarter of a century; a few of them through the entire twenty-five years. We say "a few" for many have moved to other cities, some have been led of the Lord into other fields of labor, while some "went out from us because they were not of us." A goodly number the Lord has promoted, taking them from this school of labor, trial, sorrow and joy intermingled, to the place of eternal rest with Himself, awaiting the resurrection morning, when with glorified bodies, they with us, shall "meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Of such promoted ones we would remember: — Sisters Ribley, Morris, Percival, Belle Pulver, Frawle, Dollar and Brown; Brothers Burn, Brooks, Miller, Sterry and Simpson.

Surely, whatever good has been accomplished through the humble instrumentality of this work has been due to the "riches of His grace" who has "called us out of darkness into this marvelous light" and then given to us the "ministry of reconciliation."

He only has equipped us for this ministry by

the Holy Spirit and the Word of Truth.

So it has not been "with excellency of speech or of wisdom" that we have declared the testimony of God, but while "ill weakness and in fear and in much trembling" our speech and preaching has not been "with enticing words of man's wisdom but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power," that the faith of hearers should not stand in the wisdom of man but the power of God. I Cor. 2:1-6.

Thus none of us would boast save in the Lord. For the future, should our lives still be spared, even though we should have (as we will, if faithful) some fellowship with Him in suffering; yet, "God is able to make all grace abound" toward us, that having all sufficiency in all things we "abound to every good work."

Believing, as we do, that the coming of our Lord draweth nigh, the deep longing of our heart is to be more than ever empowered by the blessed Holy Spirit to be used as bumble instruments in His hands, for His glory.

Finally, "the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and the patient waiting for Christ," who seems now to be saying "Behold, I come quickly and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work, shall be."

"Even so, come Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

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