

150  
Chard  
Hys

26  
260  
335  
18

Press Co

---

---

REPORT OF THE EXERCISES

OF THE

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

Organization of Friends' Bible School,

FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE,

WOONSOCKET, R. I.

*First Day Evening, Tenth Month, 30th, 7 o'clock, 1887.*

---

---

REPORT OF THE EXERCISES

OF THE

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

Organization of Friends' Bible School,

FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE,

WOONSOCKET, R. I.

*First Day Evening, Tenth Month, 30th, 7 o'clock, 1887.*

COMMITTEE OF ARRANGEMENTS:

JAMES S. READ,

GEORGE F. VARNEY,      SARAH MARBLE,

OSCAR J. MORSE,      BERTHA MORSE.

---

WOONSOCKET, R. I.

1887.

Press of  
CARL WHEELOCK,  
Woonsocket, R. I.

## EXERCISES.

---

The Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the organization of the Friends' Bible-School, Woonsocket, R. I., was observed on First day evening, 10th mo., 30th, 1887.

The parents and friends of the school manifested their interest in the occasion by their presence, completely filling the house; and the faces of many who were former members of the school were recognized.

A pleasant greeting was extended to all, in the word "Welcome," which was suspended above the platform, with the dates 1862 and 1887 on either side.

The exercises were opened by the singing of "Coronation."

James S. Read, Superintendent of the school, read the XCth Psalm.

After an impressive silence, Jesse McPherson offered prayer.

The Superintendent delivered the following address of welcome:

It gives me much pleasure to see so many friends of the Bible-school here to-night. It is also a pleasure to meet so many who, in years past, were members of this school.

We welcome you one and all, this evening, on this the twenty-fifth anniversary of our organization.

We welcome you in the name of our blessed Lord and Saviour, the "King of kings, and Lord of lords."

There have been many changes in the membership of our school, since our organization. Some have moved away; others have joined our school, while some have gone to their home above, never more to meet with us again below.

We cannot welcome them here to-night, but we trust they are waiting to welcome us on the other shore, when this brief life is o'er. Here we meet to part again; but when we meet in Heaven above there will be no parting there.

Of the fifty-six names enrolled as members of the school, only twelve of that number are members of the school to-day.

We find by looking over our records that in the year 1874 our membership had been reduced to thirty-eight, since which time, by the united efforts of the officers and teachers, the school has gradually increased in numbers and interest, year by year, and to-day we have a membership of one hundred and twenty. I sincerely hope and trust that the good work begun in this place more than a quarter of a century ago, will still go forward; that the workers may not grow "weary in well doing," remembering the promise, that in "due season we shall reap if we faint not."

"Soon will our earthly race be run,  
Our mortal frames decay;  
Parents and children, one by one,  
Must die and pass away.

"Great God! impress this solemn thought,  
To-night in every breast;  
That both the teachers and the taught,  
May enter to thy rest."

Many of the children took part in the following

CONCERT EXERCISES.

Recitations	-----	Dency A. Wilbur's class
"	-----	Josephine Todd's "
"	-----	Angeline McPherson's "
"The Child's Idea of Heaven," (dialogue)	-----	Herbert and Cora Carpenter
"Growing Up for Jesus," (singing)	-----	Dency A. Wilbur's class
"Help One Another"	-----	Cora Mowry
"Your Mission"	-----	Flora Daniels
"Blessing of Song"	-----	Emma Paine
"Buds of Promise" (singing)	-----	Grace and Alice Lothrop
"The Voyage"	-----	Warren Mowry
"The Book"	-----	Albert E. Todd
"The Lost Found"	-----	Jennie Lothrop
"Sabbath Home" (singing)	-----	Hannah T. Mowry's class

The Superintendent informed the school that letters had been received from absent friends, who are deeply interested in the school, expressing sentiments of encouragement, and regret that they are not able to be present at the anniver-

sary. The letters were read by Sarah Marble, Secretary of the Committee of Arrangements.

Hannah Sprague, wife of Abner K. Sprague, thus writes in reply to inquiries concerning the organization of the Bible-school:

MILFORD, Mass., 10th mo. 13th, 1887.

DEAR FRIEND:— \* \* \* We left Smithfield 25 years this next month; how long the school had been organized I cannot say,—should think about one year; I should think James Read would be able to tell more than I could, as he was very much interested in the school at that time, and I hear, he has always had a great interest in it. As for the numbers at first, it was small, but was larger almost every week, and I am glad to hear of the good numbers it has been able to gather in. It makes me think of the acorn, which is so very small, and from which the large oak will grow, and its branches spread far and wide, and it will stand firm in the midst of the storms. I hope those scholars that attend the school will stand firm in the truth as the oak; may be able to say they are thankful that there was a First-day school in that house. I should be very glad to be with you at the anniversary; think it doubtful, as I have many cares at this time.

HANNAH SPRAGUE.

NEW BEDFORD, Oct. 24th, 1887.

SARAH MARBLE, *Sec'y, Esteemed Friend*:—Your kind note of 11th inst., requesting me to write something to be read before the Friends' Bible class, on the occasion of their 25th anniversary, was duly received, and I should be very glad indeed to comply with your request if I thought I could say anything that would be either entertaining or instructive, but feeling confident I could not, I must frankly admit my inability to do so.

Mrs. Ricketson joins me in kindest regards for all old friends who may remember us, and the hope that the 25th Anniversary of the Woonsocket Friends' Bible class may develop sufficient life and interest to carry it successfully along for another quarter of a century,

Very truly, etc.,

ARTHUR RICKETSON.

NEW YORK, Oct. 27, 1887.

DEAR SISTER:—Thy letter containing request of your committee that I write something in the way of reminiscences in connection with the early history of the First-day school is received. I regret that on account of my extreme youth at the time, my recollection in that connection is rather indistinct. I do recall going with mother on two occasions, once to call on Mrs. Philbrick, and once on Thisby Andrews, to talk up the matter of starting such a school, and that I think was the "original atom" from which has evolved the present flourishing organization. It would be a great pleasure to me to be with you on the 30th inst., to join in the reunion on the 25th anniversary, but circumstances will prevent. I can only say, God bless those who, in the days of yore, saw the advantages to be derived from such a school, and had the perseverance to carry the scheme to its present successful results. Wishing you all a very happy time, I remain, Thy Devoted Brother,

W. A. MARBLE.

PROVIDENCE, R. I., Oct. 24th, 1887.

*To the Friends' Bible-school, Woonsocket:*—It does not seem possible that it is twenty-five years since the Bible-school was organized. I had to stop and go slowly over the events of the past years to fully realize that it is so. It is sixteen years since I ceased to be a member there, and but once since have I been permitted to visit the well remembered spot. Then the old familiar structure was no more; a modern building covered its ashes; new faces filled its seats, and although I rejoiced to see the congregation increase and the school flourish, my heart was saddened to see no more the dear, sweet faces, framed in the dainty, plain bonnets, (which I fear are soon to be things of the past) that I had met there since my earliest childhood. I may not be able to meet again with old or new members on that consecrated spot, but my best wishes are for their welfare, and may the Lord bless and prosper the Bible-school until many anniversaries are celebrated. I should be pleased to meet with you on this occasion; as I cannot, thank you for kindly remembering me.

SARAH E. ALDRICH FARNHAM.

NEW BEDFORD, Oct. 27th, 1887.

It is so many years since I attended the Friends' Bible-

school at your village, that I can remember little concerning it to write about. It is many, many years since a certain little girl rode over the hills of North Smithfield, her destination the old Friends' Meeting-house at Union Village. Sometimes on a low seat in the carriage with her father and mother, at other times in a larger vehicle with parents and brothers. Then the familiar face of Lydia Coe on one side, and sometimes Thomas Grover or Abner Sprague on the other, looked down from the high seat. When this same little girl was thirteen years old, one Sabbath day she again rode over the hills to the meeting-house with other members of the family; but *one* was not in the carriage with them. Just ahead of all, alone in her coffin-bed, was borne the missing *one*, carried by tender hands into the House of God, which she had often entered in life. Then quietly laid in the old burying-ground near by. Now that meeting-house has disappeared forever; a new one is in its place. New faces, and some of the old, familiar ones are there. But the lowly bed of that gentle mother is unchanged. Tender memories cluster around it; fond recollections by the children who are left. The same Heavenly Father watches over that mound in the Friends' burying ground that watches over the loving children of her who sleeps there.

LYDIA E. ALDRICH SMITH.

BOSTON, 10th mo. 27th, 1887.

*To the Woonsocket Friends' Bible-school: Dear Friends:*—No one among the many who shall gather to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of our Sabbath-school can have intenser interest in the occasion than myself, or a deeper sense of gratitude to God that He put it into the heart of one of His children to take up this work. The school had but a very small beginning. As it now is, with its many classes and large primary department, a wonderful growth is shown. Thinking of this, the text "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things," comes to me as a promise fulfilled to him who was the founder of the school, and has all these years stood at its head. For us all is it not a lesson of encouragement to greater faithfulness in the Master's service? There may have been hard toil and many discouragements to officers and teachers in the way,

but I think to-night they must get a foretaste of "enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." For myself, I was numbered early among the pupils in this school. It was not only my first Sabbath school, but the place where I first took up the study of the precious Bible, God's message of infinite love to a lost and dying world. Here the intrinsic value of that message came home to me one day. My heart was pierced with the Word, sharper than a two-edged sword, "He that is not for me is against me," called for as a reference in the lesson as I was leading in the Bible class. The light of the truth as it is in Jesus illumined my soul, and I yielded a loving obedience forevermore to the will of my God. Many others can tell the same story of sins forgiven and a Saviour found, whose names are, or have been, on its membership roll. Together we praise God for the past of this Bible-school, and crave for its future more abundant fruit, to the glorifying of His great name. Yours in the Spirit,

JENNIE ALLYN.

Haverford College, Pennsylvania.

DEAR FRIENDS:—It is pleasant to be able to send you a greeting on this 25th anniversary of the opening of the First-day school, and to unite with you in appreciating the work of your Superintendent, who has seen you grow in numbers and strength as a body. I pray that grace may abound in you, and in me, and in him, more and more, until we all come "unto the measure of the stature of the fullness" that is promised to us. I always join with pleasure in your classes, and I often look upon the Bible-class as an instrument in your midst of wider usefulness than such classes often are, for you have always endeavored to develop the powers of the members there, and development is what we all need. Wishing you much pleasure from your meeting in this way, and trusting that we all may be willing "instruments in the day of the Lord's power," I remain your friend and fellow laborer,

REBECCA M. THOMAS.

Milbury, Oct. 24th, 1887.

MISS MARBLE, DEAR FRIEND:—I have delayed writing until now, hoping that I might find time to write something appropriate to be read at the anniversary exercises. I have been very busy, and cannot do as I intended. That the oc-

casation may be a perfect success, and the school have continued and increasing prosperity, are the wishes of a former scholar. Yours truly,

NELSON E. TAFT.

Greeley, Colorado, Oct. 24, 1887.

DEAR FRIEND SARAH MARBLE:—Your letter in the dear familiar, plain language was received. How I would like to attend the anniversary, but as that is impossible, I hope to hear some account of it. Although I was a member of the school but a short time, I shall always remember with pleasure those quiet First-days in the meeting-house on the hill, and the instruction we received from Abby Battey, whom we all remember with so much love. Quite a large class we were, too, that winter of '75. There is always something particularly pleasant to me about Friends' meeting. I would go a long distance to attend one this minute, but they are not to be found in this far away country. I have not seen a Friend's bonnet since leaving dear old New England. Many and many a time have I sat in the meeting in New Bedford and heard cheering, helpful and admonitory words from our mutual friends, Wm. Thompson, Josiah Holmes and others. But none holds a warmer place than the one at "The Bank"—I like the old name. Long may the school exist to shed its good influence over its members, present and absent. With thanks that you remembered me, and a wish that the anniversary may be a very pleasant one, I am very sincerely your friend,

LILLIE ALYNN PORTER.

Abbott Run, R. I., Oct. 25th, 1887.

DEAR FRIEND:—Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to be with you on the 30th, but as I cannot, must be content with wishing you a pleasant evening and a profitable time. I am glad to have been a member of the school, and shall always remember with pleasure the year in Union Village and the friends I found there. Sincerely,

EFFIE L. CARGILL.

Woonsocket, 10, 29, '87.

MY DEAR FRIENDS:—The Superintendent of our Sabbath school has invited me to write something for the occasion on which you are met, but feeling quite unqualified, thought I might be excused, but on reflection think I shall feel best

satisfied just to tell you that, although I have entered my ninetieth year, my interest in Sabbath schools has not abated, for I think, if rightly conducted, they are productive of a vast amount of good, as I believe eternity will tell. I do feel much sympathy for the teachers, and hope you will not be disheartened, but toil on, looking prayerfully to our Father in Heaven for wisdom, rightly to teach the precious immortals who are listening to your instructions. "He which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully;" and that your harvest may be a golden one is my desire. I hope you, dear children, will be obedient and obliging to your teachers, who are spending their time and doing much to make you useful and happy. The dear Saviour said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," and may you pray to love and serve this kind Saviour, and may we all so live as to be prepared to meet Him.

"O, that in yonder sacred throng,  
We at his feet may fall;  
We'll join the everlasting song,  
And crown him Lord of all,"

is the prayer of your affectionate friend,

THISBY ANDREWS.

ROCKFORD SEMINARY, Rockford, Ill., Oct. 26, 1887.

*To the Friends' S. S. of Woonsocket, R. I.*

DEAR FRIENDS:—In sending a word of greeting for this 25th anniversary of our S. S. I realize that the pleasure I confer will necessarily be small in comparison with my own enjoyment in being allowed a small share in the exercise; but I have yielded to the temptation enticingly presented by the committee, and I hope to receive from all present the same friendly indulgence towards this weakness as I have experienced in the past towards greater ones. I like to imagine myself present in person in the little meeting-house on the hill, that grows dearer to me every year. Each Sabbath brings it vividly before my mind. I see the delicately tinted walls, the high seat with its familiar faces, some of which we miss so sadly. I almost hear the call of the birds outside, that makes the hush within deeper, and I feel the

sense of peace that steals over me at the very threshold. In that room the Holy Spirit has taught me sweet lessons of trust and patience. It is there that I have learned a broader Christian charity, and marked the unity of aim that makes us all "one in Christ Jesus;" and I am thankful for this chance of acknowledging the cordiality with which I have been welcomed into the work of this S. S. and its rich rewards.

It seems to me that this is hardly so much a time for congratulation as if human hands had built up the fair structure out of the first rough materials, but a time for gathering up the lessons of the last twenty-five years, and putting them into a form for future use. To me the most striking lesson is the sure reward of faithful, quiet persistence in duty, even through discouragements, without the inspiration of numbers or visible promise of success. It is summed up in "not looking back" after "putting one's hand to the plough." It is certain that the best promise for success in the future lies in our determination to live up to this standard. I hope to be present in body, rather than in spirit, at the fiftieth anniversary of this S. S. With greeting to all, I am yours in sincerity and in truth,

LUCY A. BUSHEE.

Jesse McPherson read the following letter, received from the Pastor of the Globe Congregational Church:

WOONSOCKET, Oct. 30th, 1887.

MY DEAR BRETHREN:—May the Lord greatly bless you this evening as you gather to celebrate the 25th anniversary of your Bible-school. We cannot estimate the harvest of these years, but God can, and will surely honor them that honor Him. "My word," He says, "shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please," so we can trust the good seed sown will spring up and bear fruit a hundred fold. Let us labor on faithfully. I would gladly be with you to-night, but cannot. I shall pray for you. Yours for the Master,

E. S. GOULD.

The Superintendent read the following letter from the Rector of St. James Episcopal Church:

WOONSOCKET, R. I., Oct. 30th, 1887.

JAMES S. READ, DEAR FRIEND:—I am very sorry that

the services at St. James Church to-night make it impossible for me to attend the twenty-fifth anniversary exercises of the Bible-school of the Friends' Society. I thank my fellow-Christians of the Friends' Society for the courtesy of the invitation, and I desire to rejoice with you in the prosperity with which God is blessing you. May the Light that lighteth every man be with you, and abide with you always. Yours faithfully in Christ,  
WM. SHEAFE CHASE.

The history of the school was then read by the author, Dency A. Wilbur.

#### HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL.

It is meet that we should come together to-night for the observance of the "silver anniversary" of our Bible-school, in this quiet place to meet one another again, and as we talk of the days gone by, perchance dear old faces will come to us from the "shadowy past," with the memories of their earnest labors and love for the school.

As the memories cluster around those who have toiled so many years in the school, underneath the statistics which must enter into a paper like this, lies a deeper meaning than that of mere figures; they will tell them of years spent in the Master's service, and of souls strengthened to higher and nobler purposes.

Abner King Sprague, a member of the Society of Friends, first awakened an interest to establish a Friends' First-day school in this place. In early manhood, during his apprenticeship as a scythe-maker, his heart was touched by the grace of God, and filled with an earnest longing to tell others of what his Saviour had done for him, that they too might rejoice in his mercy. We hear of him holding meetings in dimly-lighted school-houses in remote districts or in the neighboring cottages. He was not a learned man, but he endeavored to improve well the talents entrusted to him.

The Woonsocket Bible-school was opened 7th mo. 29th, 1860, but we have no records to tell us the exact number present. The school was held before the meeting. It is recollected that Abner K. Sprague taught the Bible class, and in proof of this a letter written to James S. Read from Fall River, 8th mo. 30th, 1860, is preserved, in which he writes:

"I am in this place, and am inclined to spend the Sabbath here, therefore respectfully solicit thy care of the school and the Bible class on first-day next." Hannah Sprague, wife of Abner K. Sprague, and Sarah Osborne also taught at this time, the former teaching the little children. Abner K. Sprague continued to labor earnestly in behalf of the school, and rejoiced to see it slowly increasing in interest and numbers. He had been employed as a scythe-maker for many years at Forestdale, but soon after the war of the rebellion commenced the manufacture of sabres was substituted for that of scythes, and thus our friend was obliged to leave his home and family and seek employment elsewhere, for his conscience would not permit him to fashion those instruments of war. He exemplified his thorough belief in the principles of peace as held by the Society of Friends.

Although obliged to sever his connection with the school, he saw others coming forward to carry on the work, for 10th mo. 26th, 1862, the Woonsocket Bible-school was organized by the choosing of officers and the enacting of by-laws by which the school was to be governed. Abner K. Sprague sent a farewell address to the school, which was read 1st mo. 18th, 1863. He lived a few years, but the circumstances of his death are unknown to his friends. The first officers elected were James S. Read, superintendent; Abel C. Monroe, vice-superintendent; William H. Aldrich, secretary; Louisa B. Cranston, librarian, and the election was to be held semi-annually, which was the custom until 4th mo., 1869. Since that time the officers have been elected annually. The election of James S. Read to the office of superintendent for twenty-five consecutive years testifies to the confidence reposed in him by the members of the school, and his faithfulness to duty.

The office of vice-superintendent has been acceptably filled by Abel C. Monroe, Dr. Arthur Ricketson, William H. Aldrich, Richard Battey, Abby S. Battey, and the present incumbent, George F. Varney.

Fourteen months after the adoption of the by-laws of the school they were so amended as to provide for an additional office, that of treasurer. Calvin Knowles was first elected, but 4th mo. 30th, 1864, he makes the request "for the elec-



tion of some one to succeed him, as he is under apprehension that his connection with the school might not be of long continuance." The school regretted the removal of this valued member. Esther Osborne received the appointment, and for twenty-three years has held the office of treasurer, judiciously caring for the financial interests of the school. Calvin Knowles received the sum of \$6.90 for the last year he held the office of treasurer. At this time each member paid for his own question books and papers, instead of being supplied by the school. There was received from 4th mo. 30th, 1886, to 4th mo. 30th, 1887, \$99.07.

William H. Aldrich was the first secretary, and remained in office five years. He was successively followed by William C. Monroe, Sarah Marble, Oscar J. Morse, Annie Thayer, Hattie B. Aldrich and Hannah L. Wilbur. The duties of the office have increased with the growth of the school, and its connection with the Quarterly Conference of Bible-schools.

There were fifty-six names enrolled at the organization of the school; the average attendance for the first six months was thirty-three. First on the list is the name of the venerable Thisby Andrews, whose words of sympathy now often cheer the hearts of the teachers.

As the eye follows the list, how many names we find of those who have gone "unto that school where Christ himself doth rule." Lydia B. Coe, an aged minister, will long be remembered for her affectionate interest in the welfare of the young, and she gladly welcomed the movement to gather them in, to teach them of Jesus and his word. She was unable to take an active part in the school, but she often spoke of the value of learning the Scriptures in childhood. When the lamp of life burnt dimly, and she failed to recognize her friends, the Bible texts were often on her lips.

The Bible-class was taught after the organization by Abel C. Monroe, and the other classes by Phebe A. Marble, Hannah Sprague and Alice R. Cranston. Abel C. Monroe was connected with the Bible class, either as teacher or member, until his sudden death, 8th mo. 10th, 1883. A true Christian, with a strong love for the Scriptures, he was valued as a teacher and member, and will long be held in

grateful remembrance by the meeting and school. In 1871 Abby S. Battey became a member of the school and teacher of the Bible class until a way opened for her to form a class of young people. She soon had an interesting class, and they had a thorough teacher. She passed to her eternal rest 11th mo. 22d, 1882. She had the satisfaction of seeing most of that class become Christians, and many of them members of the Society of Friends. The scant records which we have tell us that this school passed through many trials, for in 10th mo., 1874, twelve years after the organization, there were but thirty-eight names enrolled, with three classes, besides the Bible class, taught by Abby S. Battey, Emily R. Ballou and Sarah Marble. In that year teachers' meetings were held, but for some reason they were discontinued. We do not find mention of them again until 1877; the total enrollment at this time was fifty-five. One of the articles of the constitution provides on the first Sixth day evening of each month, after 10th mo. 26th, 1862, "for a social meeting of the members of the school, and all others who would like to come, to be holden at their respective residences, and continue as long as the school might deem desirable." The first gathering was at the house of Edward Cranston; twenty-two persons were present. Lois A. Aldrich was elected president, Louisa B. Cranston, vice-president, and Rebecca H. Marble, secretary. Lois A. Aldrich soon sent in her resignation, and Phebe A. Marble was elected to fill that office. These meetings were opened by reading in the Bible, and the rest of the evening was spent in reading, conversation or social amusement. It is presumed the young people contributed their share to the entertainment, for it is recorded that Willie Monroe and Willie Marble spoke an interesting dialogue. The meetings were held during the dark period of the war of the rebellion, and the members knit mittens for the soldiers, and prepared clothing for the refugees who came within our lines, for the heart of the Society of Friends ever beats in sympathy with the oppressed.

We have records that these pleasant meetings were held during two winters, but there is no reason assigned for their discontinuance.

A pleasant feature in the early days of the school was the devoting of the first First-day in each month to the "repeating of Scriptures, poetry or any suitable piece of composition, for the benefit of the children." The older members especially enjoyed it. What beautiful selections we listened to from Bernard Barton, Whittier, Longfellow, Bryant and others, and with what pathos some of the aged sisters would repeat Psalms, which seemed to voice their own experience. An hour spent in this way could not but have an elevating influence upon the young. When the Bible-school commenced there was a small library of books belonging to the Friends, but the Journal of George Fox, or Barclay's Apology, or "Sewell's ancient tome," were not popular reading. It is recorded in an old diary, 8th mo. 11th, 1860, that Phebe A. Marble was collecting books for young people. She must have met with success, for at the organization of the school Louisa B. Cranston was appointed librarian. She was succeeded by Hannah L. Wilbur, Alice R. Cranston and Emily R. Ballou.

The old meeting-house, which had been our home for twenty-one years, was destroyed by fire 5th mo. 12th, 1881. The school records and the library were also consumed. The meeting and school found comfortable quarters in the house of Prof. James Bushee, where they remained until this house was opened for worship in 11th mo. 10th, 1881.

The teachers and scholars came to their new home with renewed interest in the work. The total enrollment was seventy, with three classes: the Bible-class, taught by its members in turn, and Abby S. Battey and Sarah Marble teachers of the other two classes. Soon Laura A. Read established a class. The primary class, which was first formed twenty years ago by Emily R. Ballou, who was succeeded by Annie Thayer and Herbert O. Aldrich as teachers, had been discontinued, but in 12th mo., 1881, it was reopened with twelve children, taught by Dency A. Wilbur. George F. Varney became teacher of a young people's class, 7th mo., 1882, which position he continues to fill. The necessity for a library was soon felt, and in 4th mo. 30th, 1883, it was proposed to raise fifty dollars for the purchase of books. The call was quickly responded to, and in 6th mo.,

1883, the library was opened with one hundred and thirty-five volumes, some of the books being the gift of the "Obadiah Brown fund." Additions have been made, until now there are about three hundred and fifty volumes, under the care of the efficient librarian, Elisha T. Read.

The school has ever been ready to help the needy in its own borders, or to relieve the distress of those in other places.

Since 1883 it has been contributing with the other schools of the Smithfield Quarterly Conference toward the education of a girl at the Brumana Mission, at Mt. Lebanon.

The school increased in numbers rapidly. Hannah T. Mowry succeeded Abby S. Battey as teacher in 1882, and in 10th mo., 1883, another class was established, with Josephine Todd as teacher.

The Bible-class is now taught by Jesse McPherson, and recently Angeline McPherson and Herbert O. Aldrich have become teachers.

Total enrollment since 1st mo., 1887, is one hundred and forty-six, with eight classes. James S. Read was one of the four or five persons who met with Abner K. Sprague that bright morning, 7th mo. 29th, 1860, for the first time as a Bible-school, in the old meeting-house. He knows better than any other individual of the struggles and adversities which the work has encountered. To-night, as he sees the goodly proportions the little plant has reached, nurtured by the prayers and faithful labors of himself and earnest co-workers, he truly realizes in his own experience the promise "that they that so win tears shall reap in joy." Is the school safe because it now rests on such a firm foundation? Is there no work for us to do? We are indeed reaping fruits on which we have bestowed no labors.

Let us prayerfully and carefully do our day's work, that the school may increase in usefulness, and at last may we all join in the anthem of praise to Him who hath loved us and washed us in His own blood.

Esther Osborne recited the following poem, composed by her for the occasion:

## POEM.

Long years ago, when life was young,  
 At making rhymes I tried my skill;  
 A failure then! 'twill prove so now;  
 The gift I lack—I have the will.

Though rhymes may fail, my theme is good,  
 For old and young will never tire  
 To hear the blessed story told:  
 By angels sung with heavenly lyre.

A song which ravished mortal ear  
 On Bethlehem's plains the shepherds heard:  
 Fear not! the holy angel said,  
 A Christ is born! the blessed Word.

To bring to childhood's listening ear,  
 This glorious truth, in simplest way,  
 Suggested to some pious soul  
 A school to teach on Sabbath day.

An epoch in our Sabbath school  
 We meet to-night to celebrate;  
 To note what progress has been made  
 From earliest to its latest date.

One faithful leader, from the first  
 Long years of patient toil has given;  
 While we would honor him to-night,  
 His best reward will be—in Heaven.

Dear children, may you early know  
 The blessing of a Saviour's love;  
 His impress, on your hearts received,  
 You can by daily action prove.

Oh blessed Christ! we ask to-night  
 Thy Spirit may our lives inspire,  
 To lofty thought, and generous deed,  
 And warm our hearts with sacred fire.

Without Thee, Lord, all hope is vain,  
 To reach at last the Heavenly home;  
 Striving ourselves, the way to mark,  
 Our feet in hopeless darkness roam.

Thou art the Way, the Truth, the Life,  
 To every humble seeking one;  
 Thy blessed promises are sure  
 Till time its destined course has run.

Richard Battey, being called on for reminiscences, said he had been a member of this Bible-school more than sixteen years; had watched its proceedings with interest and satisfaction. With increasing numbers there was manifestly increasing interest in Bible study. A call for reminiscences brings to mind many blessings which can truly be acknowledged: the faithful earnestness with which officers and teachers have discharged their duties, the growing interest and increasing numbers. Yet it also brings to mind many changes. Some have gone to remote parts of our country, and others, we humbly trust, to that better country, from whence there is no return. One, a teacher, some members of whose class are present this evening, composed these lines:

“Come then, dear Lord, and live in me,  
 The life thou'dst have me live in thee,  
 And fill my soul with love.  
 O, may I here on earth begin  
 The song the ransomed spirits sing  
 In the bright realms of love.

“That song redeeming love must be;  
 The love which makes my spirit free  
 From sin's dark, fearful stain;  
 Redeeming love; O, let the sound  
 Be sent to earth's remotest bound,  
 In one unceasing strain.

“ And when my earthly course is run,  
 And the great work of life is done,  
 May I, without alloy,  
 Sing of thy pard'ning love and grace,  
 Safe in Heaven, thy dwelling place,  
 Sweet home of endless joy.”

Jos. Russel Marble being called on said: When we have been constantly in the presence of our friends for a series of years, the changes which take place in their personal appearance are so gradual that we do not notice them, and forgetting them in the past, know them only in the present. So it is with my connection with this Bible-school. It has been so constant I have scarcely felt the changes that have taken place, and it is only by a strong effort of memory that I can call up its early history. When we see its numerous classes, it is almost impossible to believe that so few years ago only about five persons were present at its inception. Its growth has been healthy and constant, the result, under the goodness of God, of the united efforts of all concerned.

I do remember quite distinctly a class that used to meet in the gallery of the old meeting-house, on the men's side, of which I was a member. It was not taught exactly as you teach similar classes to-day. We had a question book, in which the questions were short and the answers were very long, and these we were supposed to learn by rote. It was particularly onerous for me, as I was the only Friend in the class, and was told I must set a good example, and it required considerable study on Seventh-day night and First-day morning.

One thing we did that was good for us, and that was to learn the Bible. We did not discuss its types and shadows, but were well grounded in the twenty-third Psalm and other chapters which remain still clear in our minds.

We had no picnics and no Christmas trees in those almost pre-historic times, and the marvellous growth in numbers, if not in spiritual life, which you have about July 4th and December 25th were unknown.

But for myself, I know that something of high purpose and right way of life was gained by the lessons taught and the examples set us by our teachers. The neighborhood and

the meeting have gained largely I am sure by the earnest efforts and prayers of the members and officers of the school, and I trust it may go on from strength to strength during its future.

Hannah L. Wilbur, when called on, read the following: We have been represented to night as a sober, studious school; not a word has been said about our picnics and Christmas trees, which have been bright spots in the lives of many of us. Of course we have had our perplexities in these things, and have learned the truth of the adage, “ many men of many minds.” Our first Christmas trees were at the house of Russel Marble, but the school soon became too large for this hospitable home to comfortably accommodate, and the old meeting-house was opened for us in 1875, just one hundred years after it was remodeled.

It was indeed used for a purpose that the fathers never dreamed of, but if they could have seen the delight of the children, as the shutters slowly arose and brought to view the tree, their kind hearts would have beat in loving accord with the children. Some lines have been preserved which were written by Willie Marble and read on this occasion:

“ Kind friends and neighbors all,  
 We're glad to meet you here,  
 To join in these our pleasures,  
 And this our Christmas cheer.

“ No doubt you all do wonder  
 That such a thing could be,  
 To come to the old Friends' meeting-house  
 To a real Christmas tree!

“ But such, dear friends, is quite the fact,  
 As we now present to view  
 Our virgin Quaker Christmas tree,  
 With its gifts for each of you.

“ But should upon our tree be found  
 Some fruit of little worth,  
 Remember, trees don't bear as well  
 The first year of their birth.

“Remember, too, this soil is strange  
For a thing of this kind to grow,  
But we've rooted it well this year, I think,  
And so it's all right you know.

“And while its roots run deeper still,  
As each new year we see,  
We'll ere look back with joy and pride,  
To this first Christmas tree.”

The prophecy indeed has been fulfilled, for the roots do run deeper still each year.

We have had our sorrows as well as our merry-makings. Perchance some one may recall to-night Minnie Staples, who loved the school so much; almost the last time she came she said to her teacher, “I can say now I love Jesus.” Soon after she was called home. And we remember, too, a bright, black-eyed boy, who was ever helpful in our good times, and his fun often cropped out in school; but as he grew older he became more thoughtful, and when the messenger suddenly came to Willie Andrews we rejoiced that the truths he had learned had already begun to bear fruit in a new life. Only twice have we been called to part with a young member of our school.

Prof. James Bushee responded as follows:

I am happy to be present on this interesting occasion.

Circumstances prevented my knowing but little of the early history of the Sabbath-school and Bible-class, whose twenty-fifth anniversary we are now assembled to commemorate. For the last seven years, however, I have been a member of the Bible-class, and have enjoyed its privileges with much pleasure and profit.

During this time an opportunity was presented of observing the general character and working of the Sabbath-school, and though not directly connected with it, was able to form, as I trust, some definite idea of the prominent elements of its prosperity and success.

Contrasting the advanced condition of the school as we find it to-day with its small and feeble beginning, we are naturally led to inquire what are the means which have produced this remarkable result? While the facts connected

with this question may have a broad range of application and may be of general interest to all engaged in Sabbath-school work, it is my purpose to occupy the few moments allowed me on this occasion in considering the subject with special reference to our own school. The causes then which have contributed largely as I conceive to the present prosperity of the school may be briefly stated:

1. The excellent qualifications of the teachers.
2. Their earnest devotion to duty.
3. The happy adaptation of teachers to their respective classes.

It is well known that young and unqualified persons are, from apparent necessity, too often placed in highly responsible positions as teachers in some of our Sabbath-schools, while the teachers here, perhaps without exception, have the advantage of mature age and judgment, with a due share of general knowledge and culture, forming a sound basis of preparation for their work; some of them indeed having had more or less experience as teachers in schools of general education, giving them a wider field of illustrations and more ample means of clothing great truths in simple garbs, bringing them down to the capacity of youthful minds.

Above all, it is believed this school is especially favored with living Christian teachers, who are thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the Gospel, have put on Christ and become heirs of His kingdom.

They are therefore prepared, by aid of the Divine Spirit, to discharge the highest functions of their calling, to reflect the image of Christ, and to impress his likeness upon the minds of their pupils.

The diamond can reflect no sparkling light or impart any property not inherent in itself, neither can teachers impart to their pupils what they do not possess.

But when duly qualified and clothed with the spirit of Divine grace, they pursue their labors with an untiring energy that no worldly consideration could inspire, because prompted by higher motives—the pure love of work for the Master—and just in proportion as their work becomes a power for good the yoke of duty is made easy and its burden light. Every pupil committed to the charge of such keepers may be regarded as a precious jewel, held in trust for a season,

to be polished after the "similitude of a palace," and then returned to the great Giver for immortal setting.

I have now merely to add a few words respecting the third statement.

The Superintendent, properly recognizing the principle, "the right man in the right place," has happily succeeded in organizing the school in accordance with this idea.

The teachers have, therefore, been no less successful in adapting their teachings to the age and capacity of their respective pupils, and consequently have been able to awaken an unusual degree of interest in the subjects taught. This remark holds true, from the oldest classes down through the different grades to the youngest children, each teacher being properly fitted for the post he or she occupies.

In this adaptation we find a very efficient cause operating in favor of the best interests of the school, and a sufficient reason to account mainly for the gradual increase in the number of scholars as well as the high average attendance, as we learn from the weekly record of the classes and from a general summary of their standing, as publicly announced from month to month. While these reports have been highly gratifying to the teachers and friends of the school, they serve a useful purpose in furnishing the pupils with constant incentives to order and punctuality.\*

*To the Superintendent, Teachers and Officers of the School and Bible Class :*

In view of existing facts, I can truly say, go on with your work. You have abundant cause for encouragement. Your prayers have been heard and your labors have been signally blessed. Go on then with your glorious work. Be not dismayed though dark clouds may gather in the distance, thorns may spring up in your pathway and the weight of your burdens seem greater than you can bear, remember the "Sun of Righteousness" is able to dispel the darkness of night, the "Lord of glory" to cause the desert to "blos-

\*NOTE.—It seems proper in this connection to notice that the older and more advanced scholars remain for considerable time in the same classes under good instruction until they become qualified to take charge of new classes when needed. Hence the school furnishes the *training* of its own teachers, while the Bible-class usually supplies its own leaders, who often alternate their services in alphabetical order.

som as the rose," and make even the "Valley of Achor" a resting place for the weary.

Your sincere labors for the Master I believe will be prospered, and if you faithfully endure to the end still richer blessings will be in reserve, while the "unspeakable gift" set forth in so many precious promises, will be realized as your "great reward."

"He that overcometh shall inherit *all* things," and who would desire a greater inheritance? No earthly potentate is rich enough to purchase it; and yet it is a free *gift* to all that "overcometh." Finally, the crowning honor and glory of the prophetic blessing will be yours: "The wise (teachers of wisdom) shall shine as the firmament, and those that turn many to righteousness as the stars, forever and ever."

The closing address was then delivered by Jesse McPherson.

Having been connected with the school but one year, it has been interesting to me to hear from those who were among the first scholars, twenty-five years ago, and witness, as we do this evening, no abatement in their interest, nor solicitude for the future prosperity of our Sabbath-school.

From what we learned in listening to the history of the school this evening, we see the ranks of those who have been foremost in the work of the twenty-five years passed away are being broken up; while some are in other parts, still laboring for Christ, others have passed away to their home in Heaven.

In the work of these twenty-five years there has, doubtless, been much done that was humbly and faithfully done, in the name of Jesus.

I wish to remark that the work that is going to endure the test in the great day of a final decision, will be that only that was done with an eye single to the glory of God. If work of any other character has been done, even work that at the time may have been in popular favor and had the appearance of success, when it comes to be weighed in the Balances of the Sanctuary will be found to be wanting.

There may be more or less of imperfection in all our work for Christ, but let us seek to do that only upon which God's blessing may rest, and "not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

As we turn away from the past and look into the twenty-five years to come, we wonder what those years may unfold to us. Twenty-five years will quickly pass away. What will be our individual history? Certainly the earthly race of these older scholars, some of whose voices we have heard this evening, will have been run. Some of those before me may be here, still laboring in the school; others may find their field of labor in more distant parts; and may it not be that some will be laboring among the perishing millions in heathen lands? But many now before me, even down to these little children, will have passed away forever.

"In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand," is a Divine command, applicable alike to us all.

Many long years ago, some present with us on this occasion, as Prof. Bushee, Richard Battey, and others I might name, began their seed-sowing, which has been continued through a long life. Let them now, in the evening of life, not withhold their hand.

My especial wish for them is, that their closing days on earth may be their brightest, happiest and most useful days.

For the Superintendent and you, my fellow teachers, my prayer is that more earnestness, more holy zeal, may take possession of us, that we may not rest satisfied with anything short of the salvation of the souls of those we are called upon to teach.

It is for you, little children, to begin now sowing the good seed of the kingdom, that by and by will yield you a blessed harvest. First giving your hearts to Christ, then by kind, loving words to your playmates and all whom you meet, and by obeying father and mother and your teachers, and always doing just what Jesus would have you to do, in this way, now in life's early morning, are you to begin your seed sowing, and then, as the years may come, you must not withhold your hands from this good work, but let it go on while life may last.

It is my prayer that all who are now and have been connected with the school, who are yet living, may, with those passed away, meet in the harvest home beyond the river, where "both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together."

After the singing of the hymn, "Shall we gather at the river," the exercises closed with the benediction.

MEMBERS OF THE WOONSOCKET BIBLE-SCHOOL AT ITS ORGANIZATION, 10TH MO. 26TH, 1862:

Andrews, Thisby	Gaskill, Addie
Aldrich, Anna	Hotchkiss, Edward
Aldrich, Lois A.*	Marble, Phebe*
Aldrich, Wm. Herbert*	Marble, Rebecca
Andrews, Lucy	Marble, Sarah*
Aldrich, Arnold	Marble, Willie A.
Aldrich, Sarah	Marble, Joseph R.
Aldrich, Rhoda	Monroe, Abel C.
Aldrich, Lydia E.	Monroe, Rebecca
Aldrich, Hiram	Monroe, Willie C.
Aldrich, Clarence	Mann, Arnold*
Aldrich, Thomas	Miller, Lydia
Aldrich, Lucinda	Morse, Irwin*
Aldrich, Elizabeth	Osborne, Sarah*
Arnold, Sarah J.	Philbrick, Norris
Arnold, Martin	Philbrick, Desire
Ballou, Leonard	Philbrick, Mary D.
Coe, Lydia B.	Read, Anna T.
Cranston, Sarah B.	Read, Abby E.
Cranston, Louisa B.	Read, James S.*
Cranston, Alice R.*	Sprague, Abner King
Cranston, Anna R.*	Sprague, Hannah
Cranston, Geo. E.	Taft, Nelson
Comstock, Walter	Tift, Susan
Comstock, George	Thayer, Annie
Comstock, Hiram	Wilbur, Dency A.*
Comstock, Frances	Wilbur, Hannah L.*
Comstock, Emma	Wheelock, Allston W.

MEMBERS OF WOONSOCKET BIBLE-SCHOOL ENROLLED SINCE 1ST. MO. 1ST, 1887:

OFFICERS.

James S. Read.	Superintendent.
George F. Varney,	Vice Superintendent.
Esther Osborne,	Treasurer.
Hannah L. Wilbur,	Secretary.
Elisha T. Read,	Librarian.

\*Members of Woonsocket Bible-school, 10th mo. 26th, 1887.

## TEACHERS.

Jesse McPherson,  
George F. Varney,  
Hannah T. Mowry,  
Laura A. Read,

Angeline McPherson,  
Herbert O. Aldrich,  
Josephine Todd,  
Dency A. Wilbur.

## SCHOLARS.

Aldrich, Azubah  
Aldrich, Alice H.  
Aldrich, Alice S.  
Aldrich, Bertha  
Aldrich, Desire F.  
Aldrich, Dora  
Aldrich, Elizabeth  
Aldrich, Erwin E.  
Aldrich, Lois A.  
Aldrich, Maria  
Aldrich, Sylvester S.  
Aldrich, William  
Aldrich, Wm. Herbert  
Arnold, Clarence  
Arnold, Edgar  
Andrews, Hattie  
Andrews, Johnnie  
Battey, Mary A.  
Battey, Richard  
Bushee, James  
Bushee, Lucy A.  
Batchelor, Fred.  
Batchelor, George F.  
Batchelor, Mary  
Batchelor, Willie  
Ballou, Emily  
Ballou, Florence  
Ballou, Olney  
Ballou, Walter  
Bonner, James H.  
Bonner, Nellie  
Bonner, Sarah J.  
Blackstone, Mabel  
Blackstone, Rebecca  
Burrows, Annie  
Burrows, Emily  
Burrows, Johnnie  
Cranston, Alice R.  
Cranston, Anna R.  
Carpenter, Clara  
Carpenter, Cora  
Carpenter, Chester

Carpenter, Herbert  
Carpenter, Leslie  
Cook, Alice  
Cook, Ella  
Cook, Fred.  
Cook, Mary  
Cunnor, George  
Cunnor, Jennie  
Cunnor, Nellie  
Daniels, Flora  
Ewen, Adam  
Ewen, George  
Ewen, Samuel  
Ewen, Samuel, Jr.  
Greenwood, Samuel  
Hicks, Ernest  
Kelley, George  
Kelley, Mabel  
Kelley, Robert  
Lothrop, Alice G.  
Lothrop, Celia  
Lothrop, George W., Jr.  
Lothrop, Grace B.  
Lothrop, Jennie L.  
Marble, Phebe A.  
Marble, Sarah  
McPherson, Alice  
Mann, Arnold  
Mann, Eugene  
Mann, Elgie  
Mann, Grace  
Mann, Mabel  
Mason, Abbie F.  
Mason, Edward  
Mason, Stephen  
Morse, Bertha V.  
Morse, Ervin E.  
Morse, Oscar J.  
Metcalf, Alice  
Metcalf, Hattie  
Metcalf, John  
Mowry, Albert

Mowry, Cora  
Mowry, Grace  
Mowry, Mattie  
Mowry, Warren  
Miller, Fred.  
Macomb, Arthur  
Macomb, Ella  
Niles, Belle  
Niles, Bessie  
Norton, Hattie  
Osborne, Sarah  
Orcutt, Hannah  
Paine, Charles W.  
Paine, Emma  
Paine, Edgar  
Paine, Julia  
Parkin, Robert  
Parkin, Willie  
Read, L. Isabel  
Rhodes, Alvira  
Rhodes, Charles  
Robinson, Sarah  
Redfern, Ida  
Redfern, Herbert  
Redfern, Minnie

Redfern, Walter  
Sunderland, Harry  
Sunderland, Percy  
Stewart, Arthur  
Stewart, Emory  
Stewart, Mary  
Stewart, Willis  
Sibley, Charles  
Sibley, Mabel  
Thayer, Minnie  
Thayer, Mabel  
Thayer, Sarah  
Thayer Reuben  
Todd, Albert E.  
Todd, David C.  
Varney, Sarah E.  
Volker, Charles  
Wilson, Mary  
Washburne, Ella  
Washburne, Earl  
Wales, Ethel  
Wales, Dora  
Wales, Lester  
Wilbur, Albert G.  
Warden, Sarah.



