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THE AMERICAN COLONY IN JERUSALEM.

A. M. STACK IN CHRISTIAN HERALD.

Just without the walls of Jerusalem, a few hundred yards north of the Damascus gate, lives the "American Colony." Their name is no index as to who they are or what they are. All of them are by no means Americans. Yet those who are of other countries speak our tongue and are proud of our name.

Some twenty odd years ago, a small band of Christians, desiring a more congenial atmosphere in which to live and worship God, crossed the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, and settled in the city of Jerusalem. In this society are to be found natives of Canada, England, Scotland, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, India, Roumania, and Palestine. Originally, the members of the colony were all Americans, but their peculiar social and religious life has attracted to them other people of similar beliefs.

In the colony are people who at one time were either Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Dunkards, Greeks, Christians, or Jews. But all have surrendered their former denominational tenets, and have united on the principles and practice of Christian Socialism. They have one uniform rule of social and religious life—"Love God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself." That embraces their entire creed.

The colony is composed of about 150 people—men, women and children—and they live as one great family. They occupy two large stone buildings, together with some smaller ones near by, situated a short distance from the "Tombs of the Kings." The main buildings are of Oriental style, with interior court. And there, amid the sacred scenes that surround the Holy City, they live a life more perfectly ideal than anything ever dreamed of in the philosophy of Plato. They essay to lead a life, modeled after the teachings of the Master. Their religious belief is based upon the Saviour's answer to the lawyer's question: "What is the great commandment in the law?" (Matt. 22:35-39). In the simplest way possible, they seek to fulfill in their lives the two great commandments, upon which we are told hang all the law and the prophets. In these two commandments alone, they claim, is embodied the essence of all pure religion. Their faith is simple and its application direct. They are not missionaries as we understand the term. They preach in deeds and not in words; and the life of everyone is intended to be an argument for Christianity. Their policy is to influence others by example, rather than by precept, and, considering the people among whom they live, they are not far wrong. Most of the natives are steeped in ignorance and prejudice that miracles would not convert them.

Almost all the success attainable—and that is indeed small—is with the children. Acting on this theory, the American Colony has a large and well attended school in Jerusalem. No charge for tuition is made. In this way they reach a large number of the children of the natives and teach them our language, our methods, our ideas, and some of the pupils unconsciously imbibe our religion.

Undoubtedly the way to missionary success in the Holy Land is through the schoolroom. Christians must capture a Mussulman while he is young. To convert him, we must show him that Christianity is better than Mohammedanism.

The colony's school building is within the walls of the city, and a corps of competent teachers are in charge. There is also a Kindergarten in connection with the school. Religious worship is held on every Sabbath. The colony has no regular preachers, and conducts services only on its premises. Everybody is welcome to attend. There is no sermon, but some one reads a chapter in the Bible, and a general discussion and interchange of ideas will follow. The worship is rather informal, and the ladies join freely in the discussion. They use a Bible that is some kind of literal translation, and the reading has an odd sound to English ears. Their singing is especially fine, and makes the services most attractive. In the Sabbath meetings, their discussions and explanations of the Scriptures evince study and research. They are perfectly familiar with all the Bible references to the sacred places around them. The colony gives special heed to the second great commandment, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Its members believe in the brotherhood of man, and try to live up to their belief. They fully accept Christ's definition of a "neighbor" and endeavor to be a neighbor of mankind. They add to "godliness, brotherly kindness, charity." The blind beggars that line the highways, and the wretched lepers near the city have always a friend in the American Colony. They carry their doctrine into the home circle, and in their daily life they act towards each other like real brothers and sisters. Some are married and have children, yet the unmarried members of the society work just as cheerfully to support and educate the children as their parents do. And when parents die, the children are cared for and reared as if they were brothers and sisters indeed.

They own everything in common. They believe in a direct application of Christ's teachings to social and business life and not merely to personal conduct. Each member of the colony owns an undivided and indivisible share of the whole property, and in all that is earned there is a community of interest. The baby at its mother's breast is a full stockholder, and owns as much as the hardest worker in the society. There are various sources from which they receive money, but all is earned by labor in some way. They are not supported by any church, order or society, but "hoe their own row." They have a store in the city, and sell rare coins, fancy trinkets, and novelties made of olive wood and mother-of-pearl. Among other things, some of them run a livery business, silversmith, blacksmith and cabinet shops, while others are engaged in teaching dentistry, photography, etc. The women engage in dressmaking, fruit canning and cake baking for the wealthy ladies of the city. In their social economy, every one has a particular work, and with all of their work seems to be a labor of love. There are no drones, no

kings, no queens; all are equal. The colony has a treasurer and a general manager, who looks after the finances and business affairs, but this gives him no precedence over the others. The women have two looms and several wheels, and make most of the clothing worn by themselves and the children, as well as sheets, window-curtains, carpets, etc. They also have a knitting machine and knit all the hosiery, and an experienced tailor makes most of the outer garments of the men and boys.

One of the young ladies of the colony, the daughter of a Chicago lawyer, is at the head of the government school for Mohammedan girls in Jerusalem. She is a beautiful and most accomplished young lady, and is doing a noble work among the daughters of the natives. She relates some amusing incidents of the schoolroom. When she first took charge, she found the girls had been taught nothing but the Koran. She at once put them in arithmetic, geography, etc., whereupon the mother of one young lady came over next morning very much out of temper and objected to her daughter studying geography, assigning as a reason that she "did not want any new religion taught to her girl."

In the matter of rations, it takes considerable to feed this big family. They consume eighty pounds of flour per day and other things in like proportion. At meals they ask the blessing in song. All of the colony eat in the same dining room, and several large tables are necessary to accommodate them. They are most gracious hosts and know how to entertain the stranger within the gate. They make no charge and will accept money only as a gratuity. Of course, no American would enjoy their hospitality without making them an adequate gift.

While visiting in Jerusalem, I stopped with the American Colony through a mistake, being misled by the name. Yet I am indebted to that error for one of the most agreeable experiences of my life. I never entered any home where I saw more evidence of Christian love or a more direct application of Christianity to every-day life. But to be with them and to see their principles in practice, our prejudices are weakened, if not entirely removed. They claim to be the only permanent and completely successful society of the kind on earth. They say many other attempts have been made, but all have fallen short of success.

The American Colony is well known in the Holy Land, and its members are very popular with the natives. The popularity is due in a great measure to the fact that they do not assail the religion of the natives. They do not tell a Moslem that his religion is wrong—they show him that Christianity is right. The colony has been good to the natives, and has won their hearts by many acts of kindness. It has carried to the natives the Gospel in deeds, and not in words. In their creed, there is no room for pride, envy, avarice, ambition, and all the train of evil emotions that do so much to destroy human happiness. In plain view of the Mount of Olives, within a short distance of Gethsemane and Calvary, and in the midst of so many scenes made sacred by the presence of Him who went about doing good, these simple people are devoting their lives to the service of God and the betterment of their fellowman.

EPHRIAM ANSWERED.

Cousin Pete Gives Bible Proof For Sunday School.

Germantown Route 2, Aug. 14.—Ephriam, why are you so short sighted and ignorant of God's word, not to know that Sunday School is a part of God's divine plan. We find in Mark 12-35 of Christ teaching in the temple. And Luke 6-6 of him entering into the synagogue and teaching on the Sabbath. Read the 12th chapter of Romans and especially the 7th verse where we find that Christ was a Sabbath teacher, and he has left it in the hands of any who will. Revelations 22-17: to accept to do his work, then having talents different, we should do as the above mentioned chapter says. If it be teaching let us teach even on the Sabbath day. Some will say the Bible don't say Sunday School. It matters not to the reasonable deep thinking man as to that, for we know that where teaching is being carried on is "school" in our way of speaking. Some say it don't mean to the children, but we find that there were thousands followed the Saviour besides women and children, also of Christ blessing the little ones. Then we see that the children were present too, the old, middle aged and young, learning of the only name under Heaven given among men whereby that they might be saved.

Ephriam, you seem to be falling in with Mr. Southern, pitching crime on Sunday School. We agree that there is lots of crime and the reason why is because the devil is the prince of this world and is using every means in his power to degrade the human race. Seducers shall wax worse and worse until the coming of our Lord. Then Satan shall be bound a thousand years and shall deceive the nations no more until the thousand years be fulfilled. Ephriam, will not this be the time that we have long prayed for when we pray "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in Heaven." Christ will then reign supremely in the earth.

Again, I agree that there are some, not nine out of ten, that go to Sunday School for a big time and they are generally the children of those parents who take no interest in their children, some of which would rather their children were on the creek banks fishing or in the woods hunting squirrels, etc., than to be in Sunday School. Then, can you wonder at Sunday School not making any better progress than it does? Why lay the crime on Sunday School, why on all the religious societies you mentioned, why not lay it on the devil, the author of crime. Return oh thou back-sliding one, return. Amend your ways and your doings and obey the voice of the Lord your God if you have once been a Sunday School man. Go to Sunday School. Take your children with you, study the Bible, rebuild the altars, get things right and help to keep them so.

Now, Ephriam, I hope that you will think more seriously and come out and help us get things in order. There is no use of trying to down Sunday School, for it is getting too strong to be shaken, and God is the author of it and it is going to stand through all ages. "Whosoever denieth the son, the same hath not the father, but he that acknowledgeth the son hath the father also, John 2-23. If we are of Christ we must accept his ways."

Now, Ephriam, I have given you Bible-proof for Sunday School, so please accept it and be of God. "What I say unto one, I say unto all, watch."

COUSIN PETE.

Letter From N. O. Petree Regarding The Petition of the Sauratown and Meadows Citizens.

Danbury, September 7.

Mr. Editor:

I notice in today's issue of the Reporter that attention is called to the action of the Board of County Commissioners of Stokes county in regard to a petition filed before it on Monday, by citizens of Sauratown township asking for the application of the county's part of taxes realized from the Norfolk & Western Railroad, and the Cape Fear & Yadkin Valley Railroad, (now the Atlantic & Yadkin), in said township, for the improvement of the public roads in the same, and as there seems to some misunderstanding about the matter, I beg to say that, as I understand it, in the year 1879 an act was passed by the General Assembly of North Carolina, authorizing a vote to be taken in the townships of Beaver Island, Sauratown, Meadows, and Yadkin on the question of voting a subscription to be the capital stock of the C. F. & Y. V. railroad, which provided that if the same was carried, then the Corporation should issue its certificates of stock to the townships voting the same, to be held by said townships for their own use and benefit, said certificates to be in an amount equal to that voted by the township, or townships.

That in pursuance of said Act an election was ordered and held and carried in the townships of Meadows and Sauratown, which at that time also embraced the territory of what is now Meadows, Sauratown and Danbury townships, and that the amount voted by this territory was about \$13,666.00. That the other two townships of Beaver Island and Yadkin failed to vote any subscription to said road.

That under another Act of the General Assembly passed in the year 1887, Sauratown township was also authorized to vote on the question of subscription to the capital stock of the Roanoke and Southern Railway, (now the Norfolk and Western,) and that it did vote under said Act \$10,000.00, to the capital stock of said road, and that the Act provided also for the issuing of certificates of stock for the amount voted or subscribed for the use and benefit of said township, and I am informed that the certificates of stock were issued and are now owned by these townships for the amounts voted by them.

That the General Assembly at the sessions of 1893 and 1895, after said railroads were built, passed Acts, (Chap. 448 of the Public Laws of 1893 and Chap. 131 of the Public Laws of 1895,) directing the Board of Commissioners of Stokes County to set apart each year all the County's part of the taxes realized from the N. & W. railroad in Sauratown township to provide for the payment of the interest on the bonded debt of said township for the subscription aforesaid, and also to provide a sinking fund for the payment of the said bonded debt at maturity, and that said taxes should be so set apart each year until the said township should be re-imbursed for all the subscription paid by it to the capital stock of said road, and said Acts also provided that the Board should set apart each year all the County's part of the taxes realized from the C. F. & Y. V. railroad in the townships of Sauratown and Meadows, and expend

the same exclusively in the territory embraced in Sauratown, Meadows and Danbury townships, for the improvement of the public roads, building bridges, public schools, and any other purpose that the Board might see proper to do.

That the C. F. & Y. V. railroad in the county is valued for the purposes of revenue and taxation at the sum of \$206,905.42, and the N. & W. railroad in the County is valued for the purpose of revenue and taxation at the sum of \$151,970.05.

I do not know exactly how much of the C. F. & Y. V. is in the townships of Sauratown and Meadows, but think it would be safe to say that at least half of it is, and that the valuation of same in these two townships for taxation, is at least \$103,000.00; neither do I know exactly how much of the N. & W. is in Sauratown township, but think there must be at least half, and that said half for the purposes of revenue and taxation would be as much as \$75,000.00, and perhaps a great deal more.

It appears to me that all the property in the county, the subject of general taxation, belongs to the county as a whole for the purposes of revenue and taxation, in order that the burdens of the general current expenses of the county, maintaining the poor, court expenses, etc., should fall equally on all the property in the county, and not upon any particular locality. That there was no contract between the parties voting said subscriptions, and the county, by which said townships were to be re-imbursed for their subscriptions out of the taxes paid on the railroads, or that Sauratown township should have the county's part of the taxes from the N. & W. to pay the debt that it voted, and we suppose nothing of the kind was thought of at the time the vote was cast. That said townships got everything they voted for, that is, certificates of stock for the amount subscribed, the convenience of the roads to them, and the enhancement of the value of their lands on account of same. In Yadkin township a considerable amount of money was raised by private subscriptions by the citizens of the township, to the capital stock of C. F. & Y. V., one man subscribing as much as \$2,000.00.

It will be seen by studying the Acts aforesaid, that if they were carried out it would give to the territory of Sauratown, Meadows and Danbury townships all the county's part of the taxes each year on the C. F. & Y. V. on more than \$103,000, of property belonging to the whole county, instead of the taxes on \$13,666, the amount voted by them, thus giving to them the taxes belonging to the whole county on about \$90,000.00 worth of property for which they never contributed a cent, and to give Sauratown township all the taxes each year on the county's part of the N. & W. in said township, would be giving to the exclusive use of said township the taxes on \$75,000 or more of the property that belongs to the whole county for the purposes of revenue and taxation, instead of giving it the taxes on \$10,000, voted by it, thus giving it the advantage of \$65,000 of property belonging

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