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R. and H.  
Nov. 7, 1876

**BATTLE CREEK**

After an absence of ten years and four months, it has been my privilege to again spend a little time in Battle Creek, Mich. Here I have met not only old and tried friends, pioneers and fellow-laborers of the past, but scores of new recruits who have more recently entered the gospel field. Here we have joined in praising God for mercies past and in dedicating ourselves anew to him. Vows have here been made that our labors in the future shall bear more of the impress of the Divine than ever in the past. New consecration has been made. May the Lord help us all to pay our vows, and by watchfulness hold the consecration.

Battle Creek holds an important place in connection with the cause of present truth. Being the place where important institutions are located, such as the great central publishing house of Seventh-day Adventists, the College and Sanitarium, it is the center of the work.

As I have noticed the hundreds brought under the direct influence of the College and Sanitarium, and have passed among the scores of busy hands engaged in publishing the truth in various languages, I have formed some idea of the great responsibilities of those in charge of the church and work in this place. May the Lord sustain them all in their arduous duties.

There are many interesting things connected with the rise and progress of the work in Battle Creek.

Those who now for the first time look upon these institutions have but little idea of the small beginning of the cause. As we trace the increase of the size of churches and publishing houses here, we notice that it has been in proportion to the rise of the cause elsewhere.

The first meeting-place of the few Sabbath-keepers then in Battle Creek and vicinity was in the front room of the house of Bro. Hewitt, deceased, now marked "No. 100" on Van Buren street. The first meeting I held in this place was held in that room, May 19, 1853. All the Sabbath-keepers in the place were together, and they numbered eight souls. After spending a few days at Bedford and Hastings, I returned, and joined with Bro. and Sr. White, in a general meeting held in the same room. This meeting was held June 7. Bro. and Sr. Kelsey, from Leroy, were present, and including the few who met with us from Bedford, and by gathering in some of our neighbors, we had the little room about half full. I well recollect

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Bro. White's words of encouragement on this occasion, as he spoke of the future prospects of the cause. Said he, If the few believers present are faithful, we may expect quite a church yet in Battle Creek. Prophetic as these words were, none of us then anticipated what we now behold.

The first time that Seventh-day Adventists ever used a tent for meeting purposes was in Battle Creek, on Main street, where now lies a pile of lumber, just above the railroad near Jeff's Organ Factory. This meeting was held by Eld. Cornell and myself, June 9-11, 1854. As stated at that time, we fully believed the time had come to bring the light of truth before the people, and that this method was considered the most effective. Time has certainly demonstrated the truthfulness of that statement. Last season there were more than sixty tents in the field, and many hundreds were brought to the knowledge of the truth; and among the number were two persons who took their stand with us last summer in our tent-meeting at Reno, Nevada, who received their first ideas of our faith at this first tent-meeting in Battle Creek. The seed sown so long ago at last sprung up.

The first meeting-house ever erected by the Seventh-day Adventists was in Battle Creek, on Cass street, in 1855. Its size, 18x24; and it is now the wing to a dwelling house. Some of our people thought this house was too large, but in less than two years it became a matter of absolute necessity to erect another house, 28x44. This was dedicated in November, 1857. It was my privilege to be present at the opening service, as I had just returned from Iowa. Many were at a loss to know what was to be done with such a great house.

In 1866 the Health Institute was established, and with its establishment came such an increase to our numbers that in our ordinary Sabbath meetings our house of worship was filled even to every foot of standing room, and it was a matter of necessity to erect the third house, 40 x 65, with a gallery, capable of seating 600 persons.

The progress of the cause of health reform has made a demand for more room, and the large Sanitarium building has been added to the health department. The first publishing house of 1200 feet floor-room has given place to the present brick structures, with 20,000 feet of floor-room, occupied by nearly 100 hands. The school, which was started in 1867 in a small room, has grown to a flourishing college, with an average attendance of nearly three hundred students. These workers, students, and patients, with the church and visitors, have created a demand for the large "Dime Tabernacle."

This building, 105x130 feet, will seat thirty-two hundred people. It has seating capacity in the gallery for eight hundred persons. Whatever those at a distance may think of it, to be here and see matters as they are, you would at once say, This house is needed. Citizens outside of the church, who have been watching the steady advancement of the work here, claim that the time is not far distance when even the Dime Tabernacle will be too small to accommodate the growing work.

For myself, as I walk these streets, looking back at the condition of the cause here in 1853, and then realizing its standing in 1878, my involuntary exclamation is, "What hath God wrought!" Then as I think that all these great institutions are dedicated to God's cause, a prayer ascends to him that all the workers connected with these institutions may ever realize the sacredness of their trust; that, as they humbly move forward in the discharge of their duty, they may ever have grace and wisdom to guide and sustain them; then Battle Creek, in our cause, may be a place where many may learn righteousness, and be endowed with power from on high. The Lord grant it so to be.

J. N. Loughborough.