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The Experience at Greenville

(A New Story)

By J. N. Loughborough

Among many other instances I might mention, I refer to a case where Sister White bore testimony in Greenville, Michigan. Coming into a room where Brother John Byington and myself were organizing a church, she noticed that there were other persons present. She knew the name of but one of the persons in the room aside from Brother Byington and myself, never having seen them before. She said they must excuse her if she pointed them out by describing their persons. "I will first speak," she said, "of that man in the corner of the room, the one with one eye." Someone spoke his name, --Pratt. "Well," says she, "I will call him Mr. Pratt. Don't ever take that man into your church unless you want trouble, for he never has been converted; he doesn't live up to his agreements; he makes promises to his neighbors that he doesn't fulfill, spends most of his time around the stores and shops arguing on the truth, sitting around on the dry goods boxes, talking theology, while his wife is at home cultivating the garden, digging potatoes, or providing the man's dinner for him when he gets home, or perhaps pulling brush out of the snow to cut up for firewood. His talking the truth merely disgusts the people. They think he would better be at home engaged in some honest labor to pay his debts."

Turning to another, an old gentleman, who sat nearer to her, she said, "This aged brother,"--here someone spoke and said, "Brother Barr". "Yes," she said, "Brother Barr, your trouble has been that you could not think the Lord could be merciful enough to you to forgive your sins. You have confessed to the Lord many times all the sins you knew of, and the Lord told me to say to you that he had forgiven your sins thirty-five years ago if you had only believed it." This poor old man, on whose countenance had been a look of great sadness, when this expression

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was made, said with a smile, "Has he?" "Yes," said Sister White, "Your sins are forgiven, come along and go with the church." The brother cried out, "I will." We had been trying for half an hour to get him to even give his name for the church, but he thought he was not worthy. Sister White said, "This man's case was presented before me in contrast with the other: he is a man that is punctual in all his obligations, deals uprightly with all his neighbors, provides well for his family, and the community have perfect confidence in him. He fears to say anything about the truth for fear he will mar it," adding, "Brother Barr, talk the truth to your neighbors, it will have a good effect." She then turned again to Mr. Pratt, and said, "If you could feel for about six months as Brother Barr has felt for years, as though there was no help for you, it would do you good."

Other cases were delineated in the same meeting; a man and his wife, between whom there had been some variance, were reconciled by the testimony that was brought in. At the close of the meeting this Mr. Pratt, who had been seated on the wood-box in the corner of the room, jumped down on the floor, and with great vehemence said, "I will tell you what it is, there is no kind of use in going with this people and trying to play hypocrite: you cannot do it."--1893 General Conference Daily Bulletin, February 1, 1893, pp. 80, 81.