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The Beginnings of Madison and Its Outpost Centers

By MRS. MARGUERITE JASPERSON

AT the 1939 annual gathering of Southern Self-Supporting Workers, Mrs. Jasperson, Principal of Asheville Agricultural School, Fletcher, North Carolina, gave the story of the Layman's Movement as illustrated by Madison College and its rural units. Her introductory paragraph had to do with the founding of the city of Nashville.

"One hundred fifty-nine years ago there came to the Valley of the Cumberland, a band of pioneers from over on yon side the mountains. . . . In log houses, they began the settlement which is now the city of Nashville. . . . History has told their story; probably there is not, nor ever will be, a more heroic story to tell."

In condensed form her story follows:—*Editor*

ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FOUR years later, another band of pioneers came to the Valley of the Cumberland. They, too, came from yon side the mountains. The visions that guided them were visions of Christian service, of education for a forgotten people. They had come to build not a commonwealth but a school. The foes they met were ignorance, poverty, and misunderstanding. The fields that the pioneers had cleared were worn out and depleted by neglect, the fruit of the slave system, and war that had impoverished the South.

REMEMBER
THE Annual Convention of Southern Self-Supporting Workers, Madison College, Tennessee. Begins the evening of Thursday, November 7; continues through Sunday, November 10. Those coming should make reservations in advance.

the scars of hard-won battles in many fields; Percy T. Magan, who would figure largely in the medical education work; and Elmer E. Brink, whose skill in dairying would perhaps save their lives. They built their homes, fertilized their fields, and began to teach. They, too, were to toil, to sacrifice, and to achieve. From this settlement smaller groups spread out, not far away at first, but near enough to the parent institution for counsel and

In an old plantation house from which the glory of antebellum days had departed were these pioneers to find their home. They, too, had a great leader, Edward A. Sutherland, whose name would be linked with educational progress and Christian endeavor at home and beyond the seas. There were also his wife, Sallie V. Sutherland; Miss M. Bessie DeGraw; and Mrs. Nellie H. Druillard, who bore

help, but spreading farther and farther as time went on. Newspaper syndicates and other journals have told their story. Probably the annals of educational progress have not a more unique story to tell.

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THE teachers who arrived in 1904 had pooled their fortunes, such as they were, to buy the land for the school farm, and were therefore faced immediately by the problem of self-support. But they were a resourceful crowd and Dr. Sutherland always had a way. Southern corn pone was

cheap. To learn to eat it, even to enjoy it—on this hung one's popularity. Yea more, it was a test of fitness. When the family tired of milk toast made of toasted millends and the scared milk from which the cream had forever been removed, someone, for the sake of variety, introduced a new dish called "bruis," which lingers in my memory as the same toasted millends, but a little smaller, and the same scared milk, a little scarer.

The considerable drove of hogs that went with the farm did not become an Adventist property. Practical Mother D., aware of their economic possibilities, personally sold them at the Nashville stock market, thereby adding substantially to a diminishing treasury and setting herself up for all her days with a story which she told with variations.

While the women of the group were struggling with problems of high finance and housekeeping on an unbalanced budget, Dr. Sutherland and Dr. Magan were exploring new fields of psychology afforded them by the southern beast of burden of which Mule Henry was a typical representative.

The dairy cattle on the place were at once a source of income. The milk and cream were delivered to the cream cellar behind Plantation House, where Dr. Sutherland, with student help, churned the cream and made the butter, which Miss DeGraw carried to Nashville in the milk cart and sold in return for sugar and salt, ice, and other necessities.

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CLASSWORK in the new school was directed toward the definite immediate and pressing problem of earning a living. By the fireplace in Old Plantation House, teachers and students studied together the problems of southern agriculture. It would have been hard to tell which was which, for the problem was new to all. Government bulletins and other publications on agriculture and education in the South, the Bible, and writings of Mrs. E. G. White were the textbooks. From their study they evolved such basic principles as country life, a work-study program, student government, self-support. These students were to become teachers. It was the purpose of their instructors to establish a training center from which light would radiate throughout the Southland.

Early students had the privilege of sharing intimately the problems of working side by side with the leaders. We helped Dr. Sutherland churn; we helped Mother D. in the kitchen. We put on the great pot and seethed pottage for "the sons of the prophets," and as we sat together in the dining room, we discussed vital questions.

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IT was not strange that the out-school movement should begin early. It seems significant to us now that, humble as those beginnings

were, they were in the forefront of the developing rural school. The first out-schools were started by Charles Alden at Goodlettsville, a few miles from Madison, and Braden Mulford at Fountain Head, about thirty miles away. The closest connection was maintained between them and Madison, for the ability of its students to start other work would test the workability of the Madison plan. Hill schools we called them then, and when at Madison we prayed "God bless the hill schools," these two were the sole beneficiaries of our prayers. That was before we had become "units."

A small group would purchase a piece of land, and with their hands would earn a living even as did the people whom they came to serve. One of the number would teach a child or two, possibly her own. Rural schools of that time left much to be desired, and soon others in the neighborhood would ask that she also teach their children. The school would grow, and, in time a small, neat schoolhouse would appear.

In many communities these little schools were harbingers of educational progress. They were a stimulating example to public schools. If the public school system in the South today no longer needs the private school, that in itself is evidence of the part they played as leaders in educational progress.

The aims of this Layman's Movement were never narrow. One of the first out-schools was in Cuba. The Kinsman family from Austin, Minnesota, were early friends of Madison, and their son, Calvin Kinsman, and his wife and Mr. and Mrs. Orin Wolcott started a school in Cuba during the first five years of Madison's life.

The Walen and Wallace families went to Chestnut Hill on the Highland Rim. The Woodmans and Whites located in Sequatchie Valley; the Martins and Artresses near Bon Aqua in West Tennessee. In North Carolina the Brownsbergers and Spaldings, starting at Fletcher, were soon followed by the Pisgah group, the Waller, Steinman, and Graves families. The Tolmans and Scotts were on Sand Mountain. The striking thing is that so many of these early centers are still in existence, with a story of growth and influence.

Each school was a center of Christian help in the community. Of necessity each early became somewhat of a medical center. The women nursed the sick and cared for the injured. Southern rural communities are densely populated, and many were the demands made upon the folks at the school. A mountain woman once said of a teacher, "She nursed our sick, laid out our dead, and taught the best school we ever saw."

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THE objective of the schools was to provide education for young people of limited resources but who were willing to work. Industries were operated by which students could earn their expenses, carrying a program of work and study.

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Students at Madison and in out-schools have had many financial struggles. Across my entire experience in the self-supporting school I see the word "SHOES" written in large letters. There were my own problems in student days. At Madison the rocks wore out shoes fast. In my first school, where I walked three miles a day over a rocky mountain road, I spent nearly my entire meager salary on shoes. Mrs. Brownsberger, Dr. Blanche Noble-Nicola, and others had problems involving shoes.

I needed the experience to give me sympathy for young people who were so many times to say to me, "I have no shoes." And since I once threw my worn-out shoes into the Cumberland, whenever I cross that river, I am conscious of something other than Longfellow's romantic reminiscences. Perhaps, too, I may be understood if I share the emotions of a primitive race who long for a heaven where "all God's chilluns' got shoes."

Certainly no story of the Southern work could be complete without the barrels of clothing, such as people used to send us, before the depression made a lot of them wear out their own clothes. In one school the opening of the barrel took place after faculty meeting when we were all present, each looking after his own interests. Talk about a style show! How the appearance of the very serious treasurer was changed as he strutted about in a gay kimono. And the hats! What marvels of creation! Sometimes it might be a Paris frock in which we dolled up; again, it might take a lot of Rit and remodeling. But wonderful were the possibilities of those barrels, and marvelous the resourcefulness of the self-supporting woman. A pocket could cover an impossible spot, a bit of trimming a mended place; a collar added could cover a multitude of imperfections, and when we were finished, we felt mighty virtuous and put up a brave appearance indeed when we came to convention.

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BEFORE the Madison institution was five years old, its eleven-bed sanitarium was a model of simplicity and efficiency lighted by kerosene lamps, and heated by coal stoves in which a schoolboy lighted the fires each morning. Yet to it came the elite of Nashville. Their broken bodies were healed; their broken souls restored. Much of the work would not bear the light of modern professional standards, but it produced results and set a pattern of what could be accomplished in other places. Mother D.'s methods in sanitarium work might be described as a mixture of hydrotherapy, gump-tion, and the fear of the Lord. Since no physicians were available to head up the medical work, two of the teachers rose to the situation. Professor Sutherland and Professor Magan mounted their motorcycles and went to the university for medical education.

From this small beginning an unbelievable growth has been made. Dr. Magan was called

to the medical school in California, the College of Medical Evangelists, where his influence has turned many young physicians southward. During recent years, scores of young doctors have located in needy sections of the South.

Following the development of the first schools, there was a marked interest in sanitarium and treatment room work. It presented an answer to the economic problem which was ever present. It is interesting to note that the schools that did early incorporate the sanitarium idea, have become the largest centers. There are now in existence eight sanitariums, of which five are connected with schools.

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FEW developments in the growth of the Layman's Movement have had the far-reaching influence of the arrival in 1914 of Mrs. Lida F. Scott. By that time the institution at Madison had become so large as to take the entire time and strength of the Madison faculty. Someone was needed who could give more time to extension work. When, in 1918, Mrs. Scott connected permanently with the work at Madison, it was with an understanding heart, a sympathy with the work, and a very large interest. She brought considerable means, which she has expended generously. More than that, she has given untiringly of herself. No place has been too remote for her to visit, nor too crude for her to see its possibilities. Never has she broken a bruised reed nor quenched one little wisp of smoking flax. Wherever she has gone, she has elevated the standards. How glad we have been to see her come with counsel, help, and encouragement, and how much we have come to love her. No doubt she, too, has received considerable education in sundry fields that Vassar neglected. That she has had a good time in her work, none of us will question.

To give permanency to this work, The Layman Foundation was organized in 1925. To this organization many enterprises are indebted for help, financial and otherwise. It has made the weak strong. All its dealings are on a sane, level, conservative basis, which has created confidence and developed a solid business foundation.

Feeling that the work should be carried to the highways as well as to the byways, in addition to its interest in rural districts, The Layman Foundation has promoted treatment rooms and vegetarian cafeterias in a number of southern cities. By various means these centers conducted a program of health education. Usually the city center had its roots in the country where the workers lived, and where there were probably growing up at the same time a school and sanitarium.

Often an hour before daylight, and before the city people whose breakfast they were to serve were awake, these rural dwellers living from ten to fifteen miles from the city, would be loaded into their conveyances. It was the day of the Model T when an auto was a convenience, not a comfort. In cold, in storm, in sleet or rain,

workers from Madison, Birmingham, Fletcher, Louisville for years went daily, never failing the public who looked for them. It was an ambitious project in the face of many obstacles. For one thing, we lacked trained workers, and because of this, everybody in the unit had at some time or other to take a hand at the cafeteria.

But the seeds that were sown in inexperience, and sometimes in sorrow, have yielded rich returns in a wide circle of business acquaintances and friends.

In Asheville, the food store and treatment room continues with Richard Hollar and his wife in charge, the whole a very satisfactory business. In Memphis, Harvey Bean has had a food store and treatment rooms for fourteen years. In Springfield, Missouri, the Cave and Biggs group have treatment rooms. In Durham, North Carolina, this past year treatment rooms and a food store have been started.

RECENT years have also witnessed the development of many new places, now in varying stages of growth. Lawrenceburg, in South Tennessee, is doing a fine hospital work, with Miss Samantha Whiteis still actively engaged. In Pewee Valley, near Louisville, Kentucky, the Wheelers and Peters are developing both medical and school work. Near Chunky Mississippi, Pine Forest Academy is developing both features. On Sand Mountain, Reynold Peterson and his company carry the work begun by the Tolmans and Scotts years ago, now a ten-grade school. Dr. Julius Schneider's place near Atlanta is entirely medical work, as are also Neil Martin's place at Florence, Alabama; Pine Hill at Birmingham; and Red Boiling Springs in North Tennessee.

There are a number of small rural places that carry on either health or school work, or both. At Banners Elk, up among the tall peaks of North Carolina, Brother and Sister Pound have remodelled an old farmhouse and made it a place of beauty, equipped with Brother Pound's exceptionally fine home-made furniture; Glen Alpine is in the foothills, where Dr. Amy Humphrey and company care for several patients. There are a number of places where a family cares for a patient or two, or a family conducts school, as the Mulfords and Edmisters at Altamont, and Swallens at Monteagle. It has become a great work and represents great progress and achievement.

We are proud of Madison, our senior college with over four hundred students. Pisgah, Pewee Valley, Fletcher, Fountain Head, and Chunky aggregate 280 academic students. There is a sanitarium and hospital bed capacity of 300 beds and 140 nurses-in-training. All over the South are lives that have been influenced by the work of the Layman's Movement. Recently

there came to our little branch Sabbath School a young woman with her children. Years ago, she had been a student in a rural school. She had never been able to forget what she had learned there.

"Where's Tolman?" inquired one day a tall, lank mountaineer who was painting a signboard. We asked where he had ever known Brother Tolman, and were told that in boyhood he had gone to his school on Sand Mountain. Then he modestly confessed that "The Advents taught me all I ever knowed." That very thing is true of many a girl and boy. In humble mountain homes, mothers tell their children stories they were taught years ago in one or another of our "hill schools." The work has gone to the rich and to the poor, to city home and humble mountain cabin. So has been fulfilled the Master's command to sow beside all waters.

HOW could I better end this story than with the Annual Convention, perhaps the most unifying factor of the Layman's Movement? These yearly gatherings date back to 1908, when the workers came in wagons. But they had a great story to tell. Thrilled by Mrs. Mulford's stories, I determined that I would start a school and come back to convention to tell my story. When I've failed to be here, the Fletcher crowd will tell you it was no fault of mine!

Convention time was a great event for us early students. Mother D. was at the helm and in her glory, giving orders for the care and entertainment of guests. "Child," she would say, "they are hungry;" or, "Get those women out of that bed; I was saving it for Brother So-and-So."

The wagon days are gone, but there is no other gathering on this earth like Annual Conventions. We discuss our problems and gather courage and inspiration from one another. The most attractive feature is always the reports from those who are at work in the various groups. The resourcefulness of these workers, their courage, and faith are always a wonder and inspiration. Let one who doubts the goodness of God listen to the multiple instances of His love and guiding hand. Each year there is something new, fresh, and vital. Ever since Brother Swallen fared forth in the Model T with one cylinder, determined to start his work wherever his car broke down, I have listened to his story and wished he wouldn't stop.

There are speakers also from other divisions of our denominational work, and others come to acquaint us with progress in fields outside our own.

One of the most remarkable and admirable features of the Layman's Movement has been its ability to change with the times, to meet new conditions, and to keep up with modern progress.

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