

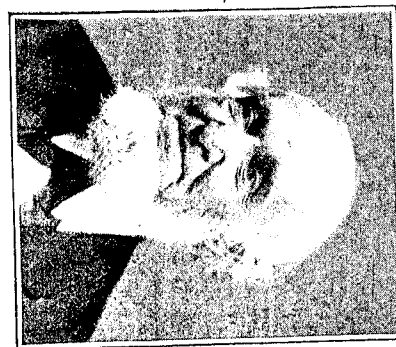
## CHAPTER XX

*IN MEMORIAM, CONTINUED FROM 1870 TO 1902*

I N the early years of Iowa the workers were few and comparatively young. A grey head in any congregation was a rare sight. Deaths were comparatively few, but, as workers increased with increasing years, they became more frequent, till now, in the thirty-one years past, the list is a long one. Of these mention can be made of but few. Naturally, it will be of the old pioneers before the Band. Of these there were seven: Turner, Reed, Gaylord, Burnham, Hitchcock, Emerson and Holbrook. They have all passed away. The first called was Rev. Reuben Gaylord, who died January 10, 1880, at the age of sixty-eight, at Fontanelle, Nebraska; a man who, from his youth, always had visions, and was never disobedient to them, of a glorious work to be done by planting Christian churches and Christian institutions in the opening West. He was the second of our pastors, and over the second of our churches formed, that at Danville, now Hartford. For seventeen years he labored with us, then, listening to a Macedonian cry from Nebraska, he went to Omaha. In a faithful pastorate there and wise labors as Home Missionary Super-



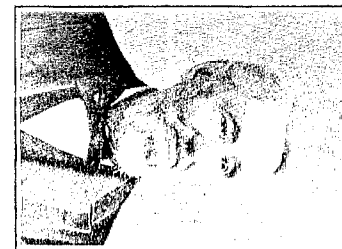
Julius A. Reed  
Reuben, (as) crd



A. T. Hitchcock  
Ft G As Tavor  
PIONEERS BEFORE THE BAND



John C. Holbrook  
Oliver Emerson



intendent, he built himself into the rising foundations of that new state. He sleeps on the banks of the Missouri. Four years later, on November 10, 1883, Rev. Oliver Emerson was called. He was born in Lynnfield, Massachusetts, March 26, 1813, making him at death seventy years of age. Of a weak body, one-half of which was paralyzed at birth, one foot deformed, never taking a step without pain, never seeing a well day, with little prospect that the days of manhood would ever be reached, at the age of fifteen he was a student at Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts. In 1835 he graduated at Waterville, Maine. Then came two years of sickness. For a second time he had sought his home, probably to die, with great sorrow that he might never be able to preach. For three days he fasted and prayed that God would in some way show if it could be. His convictions were such that he soon started for Lane Seminary, where he graduated June 10, 1840. On the same day, unable to pay cabin fare, he took deck passage on a steamer for Davenport, Iowa, where in ten days he landed, an entire stranger, with a scanty wardrobe and depleted purse. He came as a Baptist, holding open communion views, but hoping to preach in that connection. He was disappointed in this, yet he began at once to preach. So fervent was he in spirit, his sermons so clear, logical and impassioned, that he was welcomed everywhere. With a hearty welcome, also, he was received into our Association, as one

whose great business it was to preach Christ and him crucified, and not to be a disturber on minor points. He labored in this connection most happily. For forty years was he "a voice crying in the wilderness," seeking out the new settlements, a genuine frontiersman. He had his appointments always on the Sabbath, often on weekday evenings, gathering the people, now in schoolhouses, and now in their own dwellings. As circumstances demanded, he gave attention to the erection of houses of worship and the forming of churches. Twenty or twenty-five of these remain as the fruits of his labor. His voice was hushed, but his memory remains. Go to any old person who knew him in his prime, tell him you knew Father Emerson, and his eye will kindle.

It is now but a step from '84 to '85 which brings us to the death of Rev. Asa Turner. We called him Father Turner, because he was as a father to us all, and the father, too, of Congregationalism in Iowa. It was a lecture of his, in a hill town of New Hampshire, more than half a century since, on "The Advantages of Western Farming," that led to the early colonizing of Denmark, Lee County. When in 1838 our church was organized there, he was invited to become its pastor, and accepted. There he continued for nearly forty years, a common-sense evangelistic preacher. As pastor, he was a true shepherd of his flock, while he was also helpful everywhere and interested everywhere in whatever pertained to the mat-

ters of the Kingdom, in the new territory. He was everywhere welcome for his genial spirit in the homes of the people, among brother ministers, in associations and public meetings, bearing with him an atmosphere of influence among all. But the time came for his labors to be laid aside. There were a few years of rest, first with a daughter in California, afterwards with another daughter in Oskaloosa, where, in the confinement of his sick chamber, he waited in confidence in his divine Redeemer for the summons to go up higher. They came June 11, 1886, at the age of eighty-six years and six months. So he was laid to rest as a shock of corn fully ripe.

The next to depart was Rev. Julius A. Reed. He was the third to come, and took charge of the third church, the one organized at Fairfield. In a few years, when an agent of the Missionary Society was demanded, he was the man chosen, and well chosen. Of pleasing address, a good scholar, accurate and logical in thought, clear and concise in expression, he interested the people in and out of the pulpit. Faithfully he explored the field, now on horseback, more generally in his buggy, high and lifted up, made expressly for fording rivers before the bridges were built. His good judgment as to strategic points, and good business habits in the forming of churches where the aid of councils and Christian helpers could not be had, were of great value in the early days. In the early planting and growth of the college, too, he was

one of the foremost actors. So he did his part well. But there was one thing, for which he was peculiarly fitted, that he did not do. He had an observant eye and a retentive memory. No one could have written a more truthful account of the early years than he. But he failed to do it. There was considerable material for this which he had collected, valuable papers and statistics, carefully prepared. But for him the end came. It was at Davenport, at the home of a daughter, Mrs. S. F. Smith, that he died.

As we bore him away to his resting-place, it was gladness to think of a life well spent, sorrowful that we should see his face no more, and sad to think that with him we committed so much history to the grave. He was born January 16, 1809, and died Aug. 27, 1890, aged eighty-one.

The next called were Brothers Burnham and Hitchcock. Mr. Burnham, though here at the coming of the Band, soon returned to his native state, New Hampshire. He was a graduate of Dartmouth, and a conscientious Christian man, and died at Townsend, Vermont, in 1883.

Mr. Hitchcock, too, soon after the coming of the Band, exchanged his field of labor at Davenport for one across the river at Moline, Illinois. The church there, with some others along the eastern bank of the Mississippi, being for some years attached to our Association in Iowa, he continued for a while a coworker with us, doing valiant work, especially in the causes

of anti-slavery and temperance. But ere long he became fully identified with the growing interests of the Kingdom in western Illinois. He labored on to his end. His sleeping-place is on the western bank of the great river, he having died at Moline, December 15, 1873, fifty-eight years old.

To this list one more name is to be added, that of Rev. John C. Holbrook, the last of the seven to go. His life was an eventful one. Inheriting in Brattleboro, Vermont, his native place, an extensive business, it did not succeed. Coming west, it was first farming, then teaching, but disappointment in both. Being sent by Rev. Stephen Peet, Home Missionary Agent in Wisconsin, to spend a Sabbath with the then little church at Dubuque, the brethren were at once interested in him, and engaged him to be their preacher. Application for licensure soon followed and was granted. At once it was evident that he had found his calling. With earnestness, zeal and power he began and for years continued as a revival preacher. Under his preaching revival succeeded revival, not only in his own church but in settlements around. His church grew and, partaking somewhat of his spirit, became a tower of strength among the churches of northern Iowa. Ere long he was called to other fields and to work too well known to be here rehearsed. He loved Iowa and Iowa loved him. His closing years were on the western coast. In his ripe old age his last days were in the home of a daughter

in Stockton, California, where in his ninety-fifth year he died, Aug. 1, 1900.

So in passing do we pay a tribute to the older, the true pioneers here. It is for the writer a pleasure so to do. The coming of the Band at the time was a movement that naturally caught the attention of the public and many things have been ascribed to them rightfully belonging as much to those into whose labors they entered, and whose spirit was ever with them. If these words shall help to give them their true place in the history of our churches, it is but a duty done that gives pleasure.

And now we turn again to the Band. From 1843 to 1870, the period covered by the memorial chapter of the first edition, but three were taken, Hutchinson, Spaulding and Ripley. In the period from 1870 to 1901, all but two have passed the river. The first to be recorded is that of Rev. James J. Hill. He was a native of Maine and a graduate of Bowdoin. On account of the sickness and death of his father, he could not come with his brethren in 1843, but he followed the next spring, locating at Jacksonville, now Garnavillo, Clayton County. This, at the time, was the extreme northern limit of settlement, in a region where it used to be said that the staple provisions were corn dodgers, bear's meat and wild honey. There he built a house. There he led the people in the building of a church. There were born to him and his young wife, also from Maine, his two sons,

known as the Hill boys, Gershom and James. He labored in many places as an evangelist,<sup>45</sup> organizing churches, and also at such points as Savannah, Illinois, Glencoe, Minnesota, and Fayette, Iowa, where in one or two cases memorial windows have been supplied in grateful recollection of his ministry.

These labors were mostly in central and northern Iowa, but sometimes in adjacent counties in Illinois and in southern Minnesota.<sup>46</sup> His last labors were in Fayette, Iowa, where, after an illness of a year, he died Oct. 29, 1870, at the age of fifty-five, leaving a second wife and family. His two sons, already referred to, laid him away at Grinnell. The remains of their mother, the wife of his youth, they also removed from the bank of the Mississippi to rest by his side.

The next name to be dropped from the roll of the living was Rev. Daniel Lane. Like Mr. Hill, he was a native of Maine and a graduate of Bowdoin. He was the man who first said, "Well, I am going to Iowa; whether anybody else goes or not, I am going." So he always decided like questions, independently for himself, with his God. His decisions made, he was always careful as to what he said and did. "There,"

<sup>45</sup> Twenty-five years after his death, one of his sons being present at the Sunday Morning Service, November 24, 1895, in the Congregational Church in Toledo, Iowa—observed in the choir one of the members of the leading firm of lawyers in Tama Co., who said to the visitor, "Your father labored in a revival here. By him I was led to the Saviour. Except for his faithful work here I probably should not have been in that choir this morning."

<sup>46</sup> He was called upon to officiate at the first service of Plymouth Church, St. Paul, in Concert Hall on Third Street, May 16, 1858.

said one in a company of brother ministers, "there is the only perfect man I ever knew." As a God-fearing man there was in his very presence a rebuke of sin. "I always feel like hiding," said a frequenter of saloons, "when I see Mr. Lane coming along the street." His first and main pastoral work was at Keosauqua for some years, till at the solicitation of his brethren he left that field to become a teacher in the college in which and for which he did noble work. There was something in him or about him that won the esteem of all with whom he had to do, whether as pastor or teacher. When in after years the church at Keosauqua built a new house of worship, a memorial window was evidence of the abiding esteem for the first pastor. Where you find an old pupil of his there you will hear a tribute of praise to his memory. Being dead he yet speaketh. His influence among his brethren at Associations and among the churches can easily be imagined. Afflicted with increasing deafness, he gave up both teaching and preaching some years before his death, the last of which were spent near his Eastern home. Almost up to the time of his death he had a class in the Sabbath-school and conducted a weekly prayer-meeting of neighbors at his home, which was some distance from the village church. So at last the end came. It was at Freeport, Maine, the third of April, 1890, at the age of seventy-seven. But a few weeks since, April 18, 1900, his devoted wife was laid by his side. Having loved Iowa in their

youth, their chosen field of labor, they loved her to the end.

But four months after, he was followed by Brother E. B. Turner. Of an adventurous spirit, with a love of the West, after three years of student life at Jacksonville, Illinois, and having a purpose already formed to go west somewhere, he readily came into the plans of the Band, to whom his own experiences were at once of great value. He began labor here in Jones and adjacent counties. These contained the most northern settlements in the territory and the farthest to the northwest of the United States. In the years spent there he shared the hardships and exposures of the earlier settlers; they dreamed not of the conveniences of modern times. Here was the sum of his Iowa labors. After a faithful and successful pastorate at Morris, Illinois, he was called at the close of the rebellion to be Superintendent of Home Missions in Missouri. There were twelve years of arduous toil in this capacity, then followed a few more of missionary labors in New York state, and then came the evening of life, in Owego, where he died, the 6th of July, 1895, at the age of eighty-three. By his side was laid his wife, October 26, 1896.

From 1890 to 1896 there is no more break. In the latter year two were taken. First came the departure of Harvey Adams. He was the oldest of the Band. His first field was Farmington, near the Abner Kneeland colony, once noted, but now scarcely

known. He was the only one who in a busy pastorate and in labors peculiar to early Western life kept up a critical study of the Scriptures in the original languages. He was also a great reader of the Bible in the English. He read it in course, how many times through is not known. After the close of his active labors, it was once fifteen times in one year; in another, fourteen. His last pastorate was at New Hampton, where also he was pastor emeritus. Always, while strength was given him, he was a constant attendant at church, always having a seat in the pulpit and generally making a prayer in the course of the exercises. So he went on to the end which came September 23, 1896, when he was eighty-seven years old.

Three months after this came the death of Brother Robbins, December 27, 1896, at the age of seventy-nine years, ten months and five days. Then the places that knew him were to know him no more. His place in a church and in a city where for half a century he had gone in and out as a preacher of righteousness, where by his long ministrations and intimate connections with the life of the people he had come to be almost a pastor of all, that place by his death was now vacant. That place also was made vacant in the board of college trustees, where he was last of its first corporate members to be taken save one. In like manner, also, in our seminary at Chicago, as well as the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign

Missions, was there a vacancy never to be really filled. There were, moreover, other positions, other works of a public character, but the grave had taken him from them all.

On the list we are now considering but one name remains, that of Ebenezer Alden. He came in 1843 and for five years was at Tipton, Cedar County, the "one in whom all the people believed." Domestic relations were the cause of his return to the East, where he soon found a pastorate at Marshfield, Massachusetts, which he filled through his active Christian life. He died suddenly, January 4, 1889, aged eighty, having loved and loving Iowa to the end and his Iowa brethren loving him.

And now, what of those fellow workers who in these later years have been dropping from the ranks? Here, as we turn our thoughts backward, they pass before us a long procession, among them those as under-shepherds faithfully feeding their flocks, till, under the weight of years, they took the name of Father—as, Father Tenney, Hurlburt, Taylor, Todd, Windsor. Here are the names of Coleman and Upton, whose end came on the Pacific shore; of Little, once a foreign, afterwards a home missionary; of Gibbs, Avery, Allen; of Bingham, also, not so fatherly as some because in old age so young. Then there were others, not so far along in life as to take the name of Father, but "called" in their strength, before the declining years had come; as Guernsey, Thatcher, Hoyt,

Woodworth, Brintnall, and Bennett the teacher and preacher whose last labors were in Nebraska; and some cut down in the prime of life; as Dwight, Pickett, Sloan, Berry and Byres; and, younger still, June and Magoun. And names of devoted men, pillars in their church, how they multiply! Fox, Brown, Shedd, Epps, pioneer settlers of Denmark; Beardsley and Hedge, of Burlington; Rogers and Wright, the ever faithful in Mitchell association; Gaston, also, whose soul and money went into the founding of Tabor College, and—but who can give the names of the good, strong men of our churches who have passed away? And there are godly women, too, on whose counsels and prayers the life of churches hung, women of missionary zeal, whose spirits yet live—Edwards, Lassie, Riggs, Magoun, Parker, Daniels, Estes, Hillis. But here, again, who but the recording angel can tell what woman hath done in quiet, silent ways, never published to the world?

Thus are recorded a few names that come to mind. Many, many others there are just as worthy of mention, but what one memory can contain them all?

The wonderful developments of our state have been, and are yet to be, in three great lines: the physical, the educational, the moral and religious. Rich and enriching are the lives in harmony with and helpful in each. They are the lives that tend toward the culmination of all, the glory of God, in the well-being of man in a world ever growing more and more beauti-

ful, preparatory all, as designed by Him, for the glories of the next.

They who have gone before us, whose lives in part have been with ours, are sleeping now; some, the most of them, in their Iowa graves; some scattered elsewhere. But blessed are the dead that die in the Lord. They rest from their labors, and their works follow them.

"One by one  
Their work well done  
They disappear;  
Each veteran pioneer,  
Responding to the mandate of his Lord,  
Ascends to meet a rich reward,  
Translated to a brighter realm, a higher sphere."