

WEDNESDAY JULY 4, 1894.

"THE SAINTS"

Kalamazoo Weekly

A QUEER RELIGIOUS SECT OVER AT
GRAND JUNCTION.

“EVENING LIGHT” CAMP.

The Annual Camp Meeting Just Closed—
Personal Adornment Not Allowed—
School and Publications - Divine
Healing a Strong Point.

GRAND JUNCTION, June 30.—One mile north of here an inter-state camp meeting of people calling themselves Saints who believe themselves sanctified from sin and consecrated to do God's work for the redemption of the world, has just closed. They have their ministers across the sea and all over the states. They formerly held meetings two miles north of Bangor, but four years ago "the Lord most miraculously gave us possession of eighty acres" beside one of the little ponds so proudly called lakes—this particular one is Lister lake—and three years ago, when "we know not how it was to be brought about Bro. Palmer (down near Bangor) was moved upon by the spirit of God to come and gather together a force sufficient and superintend the cleaning out and putting in order the woods and prepare it for our summer assembly," and thus their summer camp became established on what they believe to be consecrated ground. For "was it not in all of nature's primitive wildness when it was shown us by the light of God to be the place to establish our headquarters for the dissemination of the gospel; and was it not miraculously kept from being sold, though offered for sale, yet no purchaser came for three years before we found ourselves directed by the Lord to make the purchase?"

The Gospel Trumpet.

They publish a weekly paper, "The Gospel Trumpet." Motto, "First pure, then valiant for the truth." It is the only journal of their church in the world. "The Shining Light" is their children's paper. The publishing house is a large store building, bought at bankrupt sale—one of the "Lord's opportunities when they were very weak and poor"—and located at the "Junction," where the Trumpet family live in two commodious dwellings just across the street, a little isolated in the western part of town. Grand Junction is a little burg of some 400 or 500, at the junction of the Chicago & West Michigan railroad with a Michigan Central branch from Kalamazoo to South Haven. It is in Van Buren county while the camp, one mile north, is in Allegan county. The "Trumpet" is edited by D. S. Warner and E. E. Byrum, and published by D. S. Warner and Sebastian Nichols.

The camp comprises the home of Sebastian Nichols, who found himself called of God "to come and take charge of the grounds and till their eighty acres the second year of their possession, and who was shown to the rest by the light of God to be just the man for the place." Beside this home are some dozen or fifteen lesser board structures, some substantially built for permanent occupancy, others but rudely put up for summer accommodations, and some barely sufficient for sleeping, meals being prepared out doors or procured at the Michels home, they furnishing board and limited lodging room during the meetings in summer. Then the canvas tents are numerous, both big and little, so that between 400 and 500 are accommodated, with daily comers and goers, and comprise people from all over the United States and some from Canada. On Sundays the unregenerate of the world and Saints too much hampered with temporal affairs to have much leisure, swelled the attendance into the thousands. Preachers, many old and young, some drive all night from the country round about and reach their goal of the camp of the "Evening Light," when the morning light is breaking.

No Dudes Allowed.

They do not believe in any personal adornment. The extreme plainness of their dress is noticeable even in these tailor made days, any they deem it a duty to "rebuke" any show of any lack of the consecrated spirit, lest "the devil get you through your pride." Their preaching is very pointed and vehement on pride, not only in dress, but in all things, especially pride in "the gift of teaching" for humanity is Christ like, dear ones praise the Lord! and all good gifts are of God, glory be to his holy name! and to Him and Him only be the praise, dear ones. Hallelujah! O, glory to God! and hundreds of "amens" respond.

Their salutations are "Praise the Lord" instead of "Good morning" or "How'd'y do," and the responsive "Amen" is the sign of a Saint. Also the "holy press" and "saintly embrace" are a frequent interchange between brother and brother, or sister and sister, but never—to the observer—between brother and sister, only a saintly hand clasp and a holy smile.

Their central tabernacle, plainly built, quiltless of paint or plastering, seats 700 or 800, and is usually well filled at the afternoon session. There is a 6 o'clock morning meeting before breakfast, which is looked upon by the steadfast as the particular time of God's grace.

A forenoon session is usually occupied by Brother Warner expounding and paving their faith with frequent reading of scripture references. His manner is very energetic, full of gesticulation, sometimes quite grotesque. His voice, strong and penetrating, may be heard all over the peaceful quiet of the camp. He is evidently their leader, viewed somewhat as a prophet by the followers. He claims to know nothing of himself, it is all of God. "I'm a man with only a little bit of a brain, how could

I could I know these things only by the grace of God. Hallelujah! He proved to the "Amens" of his hearers that the two beasts of revelations are Romanism and Protestantism; that they are the true church coming up out of "Babylonian darkness" at last and are typified by the "Evening Light." "When I came out in the evening light" is a common way of referring to their conversion.

They have some very potent preachers among the sisters. Sister Mary Cole was present and gave her experience in being called of God to leave an aged mother, whose sole support she was, calling upon herself the censure of the "Babylonians," but God had miraculously kept the dear mother, and just when she was losing faith and feeling she must give up the work to go back to her, she had \$400 back pension allowed her and \$12 a month for the rest of her life. "She used to stammer, but the Lord has overcome it."

Then there is Sister Birdie Fink, over in England, hard at work. She had to be tried and proven. Married out of poverty to a wealthy infidel, he never crossed her in her faith, a promise exacted by her parents before they permitted the marriage, but would not consent to her going out into active service. A spinal injury from an accident ended his life after three months of agony, during which he embraced her faith in Washington, D. C. She became puffed up with pride in the success that attended her preaching and God had to humble her and she suffered many trials and the devil nearly got her, but she is steadfast at last. There are others with a halo of glory won thus suffering and almost canonized only that is of the beast and never permitted. They preach purification by suffering.

The Saints' School.

Their school house is substantial, one story, has two rooms with sliding partitions between. It was built last season and school opened in September. They had from forty to fifty on the roll during winter, most of whom occupy the "home" with "Pa Michels" and "Ma Michels," being children of their ministers and others needing care and shelter. There are twenty-six under their paternal care this summer, five belonging to Brother and Sister Michels. Most of them went away after the camp meeting. The children sing before each meal after gathering at the table, then an elder Saint says grace. They serve two meals daily and a light lunch of plain, substantial food, mainly the cereals, beef, vegetables and fruit. Cooking is done on a wholesale plan. An old-fashioned Dutch oven is used. A young brother who "came out into the Evening Light" from a city bakery presides over the bread making. A quarter of beef is cooked at a time. No tea, coffee or pastry are used, and the children, in plain and varied clothing, are healthy and happy and real children all old enough to assist in the home duties. All visiting sisters "take right hold." Many of the visiting brothers found axes and took exercise in the clearing that is in progress, as all was woods three years ago. There are about ten acres of wheat, twenty of corn, with potatoes and small fruits bringing returns "just now" with orchards set for future good.

Divine Healing.

Divine healing is a strong point with them. Friday at sunset many were anointed and prayed over and adjured to keep their faith and trust firm, and they would be healed, though it took a week, for sometimes God's healing could not be "just now" but it would be done if only they had faith for so said the word. Some find themselves healed immediately.

When demonstrations of the devil are observed some Saint is moved by the "spirit of God" to "cast out devils."

They seem to prosper in their frugal life. There is no man kept record of membership, no taking in or turning out. As long as a Saint keeps his sanctification he is in the church.