

The Frontier

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REASONS FOR CHURCHGOING.

By G. W. BRUCE, Litt. B. S.
Pastor M. E. Church

The Sabbath Day was set apart for the worship of God. The only command in the Decalogue which begins with the word remember is the fourth, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," as if the Divine writer realized that there would be more danger of forgetting this than of any others, and yielding to the subtle temptations of caprice and convenience as an excuse for violating it. "Remember" stands like a solitary sentinel in front of this solemn command, yet it has been chafed under, from the ancient Jew who was stoned for gathering sticks on the Sabbath, down to the Sunday pleasure seeker, or the man who keeps open shop on the Lord's day breaking three laws, the law of the State, of the Sabbath, and of brotherly love.

Now, to be real practical, the question may be asked, "why should men go to church?" I will seek to answer the question briefly, trusting that every reader will be led of the Spirit, and inspired of God, to attend church services more regularly.

Men should go to church, for they can find peace there, that peace which De Quincy described as a resting from human labors, a Sabbath of repose, a respite granted from the secret burdens of the heart, as if he stood at a distance and aloof from the uproar of life; as if the tumult and fever and strife were suspended; as if there brooded over him a dove like and halcyon calm.

Men ought to attend church for here they hear the teachings and philosophies of Jesus, the incomparable man, and if you say that His teaching is philosophy and not religion and that He was a man and not a god, then the philosophy of that Man has redeemed the world from savagery and blessed man-kind with Christian civilization, and to my mind, it is a thing worth hearing.

In attending church we find consolation and hope. We see there the dawn and not the sunset, and it is better for man if the hope is baseless and the vision but an elusive phantom to cherish a dream so glorious and beautiful than to be weighted down and crushed with the quarried mountains of a world without hope and without God.

The church of God is the polar star



REV. G. W. BRUCE

to light our pathway in a wreckless night. It stands firm and steadfast warning humanity of the rocks and shoals, where death and destruction lie, and ever points them to the one great power that can "save from to the uttermost all that come to Him." The church ministers not only to the spiritual needs, but to the material as well, and it is there that the charities that soothe and heal and bless are scattered at the feet of man like flowers.

If all these things are true, is it not also true that we should have an attractive and comfortable place in which to worship God? Methodism is looking toward the day when she may give to the people of O'Neill a comfortable place, an attractive building in which to worship God. Until the day shall come in which we are housed in a new church building we will be glad to welcome all people at our house of worship, and when our anticipations have become realizations we will give the glad hand of welcome and

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brotherly love to all the people of O'Neill.

The pastor offers his services for the betterment of O'Neill, and will esteem it a great favor to be informed of any one needing the same individually. He will visit the sick, the shut-in, and pray with them, attend funerals when ever this is desired, whether members or non-members of his church.

He particularly desires to meet, get acquainted with, and help so far as he may be able those who have no church home. "Come thou with us and we will be of mutual assistance to each other."

From Brother George F. Mead.
Scotia, Nebraska, March 6, 1914.
In compliance with a request to write something as a "Souvenir" for the special edition of The Frontier gotten up by the M. E. Church of O'Neill, Nebraska, I herewith express my gratitude and thanks for the invitation to do so, and gladly comply with the request.

My pastorate at O'Neill in September, 1904, and continued for two years, and they were years of great pleasure and profit to me.

Our cordial welcome, when with my family we arrived in O'Neill, by Brother Benedict, who took us to his home and entertained us until we were able to move into the parsonage, has ever been a green spot in our memory.

The loyal and hearty co-operation of our unequalled choir, led by Winona Younklin, (now Mrs. W. T. Spencer, of Alliance, Nebraska,) with Bessie Snyder, (now Mrs. A. I. Meyers, of Caldwell, Idaho,) as organist, and the fourteen other young men and women who, (in spite of the predictions), so nobly stayed with us during the two years (or until most of them had married and gone away) and rendered their valuable services to both the Church and myself will always give me a feeling of joy and pleasure as memory calls up those pleasant days.

The cordial greetings from members and friends of the Church, and from citizens of O'Neill, as we have met in after years, has always made us feel that our labors were not in vain in the Lord.

We sincerely trust that the campaign you are now entering will be successful and that you will be able to build a Church that will not only reflect the Glory of God, but will be a memorial to future generations.

With best and kindest regards, I am as ever yours,
GEORGE F. MEAD.

EARLY HISTORY OF METHODISM IN HOLT COUNTY, NEB.

By REV. BARTLEY BLAIN, Page, Nebraska.

[We are pleased to have an interesting article and brief autobiography from Rev. Bartley Blain, now of Page, Nebraska, who was the builder of the present Methodist Church building in this city. Rev. Blain says: "I was born in Pultney, Stuben county, New York, March 5th, 1832. My earliest remembrance was in Ingham county, Michigan. I spent nearly three years in Albion College, Michigan, less than two years at Garrett Biblical Institute, but was unable to continue because of poor health. I went to Minnesota in April, 1851, and joined the Minnesota Conference, July 29th, 1857. I was in the United States Army against the Sioux Indians from 1863, and was again in Conference till October 28th, 1862, to November 2nd, 1880, when I came to Holt county, Nebraska."—Editors.]

Having been forbidden by my physician in Minnesota to continue ministerial work and being advised to do nothing for a while, I came to Holt county, Nebraska, the early part of May, 1880, and settled on a claim in township 29, range 9, two miles southwest of the present site of the Middle-Branch Mill, with my family lived in a tent till June and learned that farming on the frontier was a good means for restoring physical vigor. Where ever the Sabbath found me, I found people who wanted to hear the Gospel, and I wanted them to hear it, for I knew it to be the power of God unto Salvation to every one that believeth. Before the roof was on my house I had four preaching places, Steel Creek and Knoxville, Mr. Foster's and Mr. W. S. George's on the Middle Branch creek. Sunday Schools were organized in each of these places. As soon as my house was under a roof, the preaching and Sunday School at Middle Branch was moved there. I had written the County Superintendent and sent a petition for the formation of a School District along the east line of the county, and after waiting more than a month and hearing nothing, I went to O'Neill on the 15th of November, to learn what more was needed to secure the formation of a district. On reaching the County Seat I learned the Superintendent lived nine miles northwest. The next day I went to see him, and returned home with the requisite papers, driving most of the way from

O'Neill across a trackless prairie with out a house or tree in sight.

The General Conference in May, 1880, divided the Nebraska Conference and formed the West Nebraska Mission Conference, with Rev. Dr. T. B. Lemon, Superintendent, with headquarters at Kearney. Not being able to fill the preaching places of which I knew, I went to Kearney, 200 miles, on horseback in a little less than five days. Was surprised to see the familiar face of Mrs. Mary C. Ninde, of Winona, Minnesota. She was here to start the new Conference with a Woman's Foreign Missionary Society fully organized and ready for work in this Frontier Mission Conference. Rev. J. Delos Wilson was the only man I found who was willing to go to Holt county. He went and attempted to do the work of two men. Early in March, 1883, Dr. Lemon called the three preachers in this corner of his conference to meet him in Atkinson to rearrange the work of these parts. A Church building enterprise was started in Atkinson and the Church was dedicated August 26, 1883. In May of this year I was appointed to O'Neill and commenced to build a Church.

A Union Sunday School under the efficient superintendency of James H. Riggs of the Presbyterian Church had been formed, a Presbyterian Church had been organized and subscription started to build a Church before I was appointed to O'Neill. The M. E. Church in O'Neill was formed in May, 1883. The membership at first was Dr. S. M. Benner, Mrs. S. M. Benner, and Miss Sada Coykendall. Mrs. Ellen Patterson, Miss Mary Sackett and Mrs. Alberta Uttley joined later. Subscription was solicited from the people of O'Neill and vicinity. Donation of \$250.00 from the Board of Church Extension was obtained and early in September the work of building was begun. Having been appointed to fill the vacancy in the office of County Superintendent in October, my hands were more than full. My boyhood drill in carpenter work was of some use now. The work with saw, plane and hammer had not been in vain. Having solicited the subscription, I collected it with but little difficulty. The Church was opened for service on the 16th of December, 1883. By mutual agreement the Union Sunday School had been dissolved and each of the Churches organized a Sunday School of its own, and peace and harmony prevailed.

The first Protestant Church organized in Holt county, was in my house at Middle Branch on the 14th of No-

vember, 1880. Its members were: Mrs. Mary Blain, Charles Blain, Miss Nellie Blain, William E. Blain, Ada A. Blain, Wm. R. Keep, Mrs. Lois Keep, Wm. S. George, Mrs. George, Mrs. Phebe Persons. By request of Presiding Elder Leedom I began preaching at Steel Creek and Knoxville on the first Sunday in June, 1880, where Sunday Schools and preaching services were continued. In the spring of 1881 Churches were formed at each of my regular preaching places: Lambert Sod Schoolhouse, F. M. Pike's residence, where Sunday Schools were maintained, and also at Hainsville and Pleasant Valley. In the autumn of 1881 an appointment was made at the residence of Mr. Veal at Rock Falls, and another at Paddock. In each of these places Churches and Sunday Schools were formed and maintained for several years.

The first Protestant Church building erected in the county was at Inman, during the pastorate of Rev. J. Delos Wilson.

In the spring of 1883 a preaching place was made at Saratoga and a Sunday School organized.

The first Sunday School Convention in Holt county was in O'Neill, September, 1881. Several schools were represented. D. L. Pond, a Presbyterian of Inman, came with a yoke of white oxen drawing a wagon on which was a large hayrack well filled with teachers and children.

The American Bible Society had no small share in the religious work of this frontier. For when informed of our destitution, it sent me Fifty dollars worth of Bibles and Testaments for sale and donation among the people. These books were indispensable to the success of our Sunday Schools. They were also largely read by the old people. Years after, I called at the home of an old man who asked me if I remembered giving him a Testament in coarse print that he could read. I had forgotten it. He brought me the book, saying, "I kept it in a paper cover so the outside is clean." I opened it and inside was clear proof that it had been well read. He had proven this truth: "The entrance of the words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple." He enjoyed reading it. A resident of O'Neill with whom I had slight acquaintance, who I had been told was an infidel, asked me while I was in O'Neill if I could get him a good Bible. I said, "I think so." The Bible was gotten and promptly paid for. Some years later I was requested to supply the pulpit in O'Neill one Sabbath. Learning

there would be class meeting before preaching, I went to class. Who should greet me as Class Leader but the reputed infidel for whom I had purchased a Bible. I replied to his greeting: "I am glad to see you here," and he answered, "You are no more glad than I am."

I am glad to hear of the prosperity of the Church at O'Neill and hope it may continue to prosper abundantly.

Cordially yours,
BARTLEY BLAIN.

From Brother Archie Bowen.

The following is a letter received from Archie Bowen, of the O. H. S. Class of 1913, who is now studying music at Utica, N. Y.
Utica, N. Y., March 11, 1914, 263 South Street.

Dear Friends: I was very much interested to hear of the great work you are undertaking to do this year. It is a pleasure for me to sit down a few moments and write you a few lines at this time. I am now fighting the battles of this world in a large city. The surrounding atmosphere here is much different than there. The first thing I did when I came here was to join the Y. M. C. A., a splendid organization. Then I had my church letter transferred from there to the First M. E. Church of Utica, a very large church with a membership of over six hundred.

I am studying both the pipe organ and the piano at the present. Professor Magandanz, my piano teacher, is certainly great. They have recitals at the conservatory every two weeks and I play once in a while. At the next recital I will play "Sonata Op. 1, No. 1," by Haydn.

I hope this letter will be of interest to you and may the day speedily come when you will see a new M. E. Church erected in the city of O'Neill.

Yours respectfully,
Archie E. Bowen.

We are indeed glad to hear that Archie is still interested in the higher things of life and his many friends in the city all wish him abundant success in his study. It will be remembered by some that Professor Magandanz, formerly on the Nebraska Wesleyan Conservatory staff, visited O'Neill a few years ago (1911) at Commencement time and treated the people of this community to his exceptional playing.

Buy your Seed Potatoes of me. Early Ohio.—J. P. Gallagher. 42-1.
For Sale—100 head of High Grade Poland China stock hogs. Enquire of Thomas Carlon, O'Neill, Neb. 42-2.