

The
BULLETIN

SECOND PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH


OXFORD, NEW JERSEY

By

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Minister



Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.—Deuteronomy, 32:7.



And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the Lord is a God of judgment; blessed are all they that wait for him. ---Isaiah 30:18

" Our heavenly Father, who hast bestowed upon us the dear comfort of earthly friends; Look down in mercy upon those whom we love, and who love us, whether near or far away. Protect them and keep them from all danger in body and soul: prosper and bless them in all good things: suffer them never to be lonely, desolate or afraid: let no shadow come between them and us to divide our hearts: but in thine good time and way sanctify and bless all together in thy love and fellowship through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. "

Missionaries in China refuse to leave their posts to escape the war dangers. They write home saying, "We all feel privileged to be here. Of course, we deserve no credit at all for staying here; it were far harder to leave than to stay on. And how can we stay in the big houses of our stations in the coastal provinces just marking time when there will be opportunities to share hardship with the true China up behind the mountain#?"

What are hardships and perils to those who love Christ and his people? Let us support and pray!

(From 2nd page)

then a sudden banging down of the receiver, you then have the picture of what took place at the Pequest end of the telephone.

Yes, the telephone was a wonderful and mysterious device in those days, but I suspect no one but the gentleman in question ever suspected it of anticipating even television, by transmitting one's breath to far distant points."

A True Telephone Story
By Edwin C. Perkins

Old Oxford Days
By Clinton E. Weston

Recent contributions to the Bulletin have made reference to the early telephone systems installed in Oxford.

They bring to my mind, from the long past, a story which my father used to enjoy telling. At the time of this incident I suspect the telephone had become more perfected than the outfits referred to by Mr. Weston and Mr. Humphrey. Their accomplishments were really very wonderful for those days; so much so that an indefinable mystery and uncertainty was frequently associated with them.

People knew but little about them and could easily attribute to them almost supernatural powers.

It must have been quite early that one was installed between the Company Office and the Pequest Furnace. There was an estimable gentleman, employed by Mr. William Scranton, in charge of the Pequest plant. He was a Welshman by birth, and if I am not mistaken was brevetted for service in the Civil War. Having been born in the old country his ideas of even moderate use of liquor were somewhat different from those entertained by the management; and while it is probable he made use of it only off duty, and in accord with his old country habits, still there were those who suspected that, as he was located in a somewhat remote region at Pequest he might at times indulge himself with little chance of discovery.

Shortly after this telephone was installed, some of the Company Office staff planned a rather amusing joke.

When all was in readiness, the Pequest number was rung. When the answer came, the voice on the other end being the one they wanted, and imitating the voice of the manager of the Company, the following conversation ensued:— "Hello, Hello" (Answer) "Hello, hello" in a deep and crisp voice.

"Is that you _____?" "Yes" came the answer from Pequest, very respectfully spoken, having as he thought recognised the voice of his superior, in office. "Why, why, _____ have you been drinking?" "Well, if confusion, embarrassment and a complete unmaning can be expressed by a guttural stutter, hesitation, silence and _____"

(See first page)

In the fall of 1876 there came to Oxford a young lady to teach school in the old post office building at first and later in the brick school house. Her name? Miss Fannie De Witt Person. We can imagine her mingled feelings at the thought of entering upon the duties of a new position with, no doubt, some apprehension as to whether immediate success would come in this new field of endeavors, especially as her experience had been but two months as a teacher at Hazen. Here was a test to try anyone's patience and courage; for in those days it required a strict disciplinarian to cope with such a miscellaneous group who were ever ready to take advantage of the chance for mischief and trouble, and thus make anyone with a milquetoast disposition utterly miserable.

This then was the situation which faced Miss Person, and how well she met and conquered was due to her tact and natural instincts as a leader and teacher. The pupils under her soon grew to admire and respect her unusual talents; and so she achieved the success for which she so diligently worked.

The passing years have not dimmed affection for her pupils and the writer, from recent conversations with her, can testify to her coveting the happy years she spent in Oxford.

Quite a number of her former pupils are living and I am sure they will be glad to know something about the modest and retiring young lady who came to Oxford in that centennial year, and taught until 1881 when she left to teach for a year in Kennydayville, and then spending the rest of her teaching days in Belvidere; retiring several years ago. Her ancestral line is intensely interesting, but due to my limited space we can no more than refer to it briefly. Her mother, Margretta De Witt's line goes back to the 15th and 16th centuries in Holland; the family name being famous in history.

Coming from a sturdy and rugged race which struggled continuously for generations for the preservation of their country, in making canals,

(over)

draining lakes and in building dikes and these efforts produced a wise and determined race. In the meantime a reformation had set in with religious beliefs that were contrary to the established doctrine which brought on a persecution by those in power of unequalled severity.

Wholesale executions took place, and one of the most noted of these was John De Witt, a direct ancestor of Miss Person, who was beheaded.

In that town to this day is shown the spot with a marker where his tragic end occurred. The De Witts escaped to America where they would have their security and liberty in religious belief.

Jeremiah Person, Miss Person's father's line goes back to Germany.

The ancestral name was "Berzinger" and several changes were made until his arrival, when the name Person was taken. Jeremiah and Margretta being united in marriage, took up their residence in Belvidere, where for years they were respected and honored citizens. A nephew of Miss Person has built a home on the spot where her father and mother originally located.

Two years ago Miss Person gave an interesting talk at the Church Reunion, and shortly afterwards was stricken with a painful malady that has left her an invalid. Physically frail, but with a clear mind and a cheerful outlook on life, she is able to recline for a short time near a window where she can enjoy the beauty and wonders of nature, and also be delighted with a large variety of birds that come to her window to get the grain in a pan fastened to the window sill.

Her greatest joy, however, is in the receipt of many cards and messages coming from her friends, and she is truly thankful for the blessings that God in his infinite mercy and wisdom bestows upon her.

Miss Person's friends who may have the pleasure of reading this fine appreciation of her life and character will be interested to know that she will attain her 90th birthday on next Friday, Feb. 18th. They may be assured that any card or word from them will come to her like angel visits.



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