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The Bradford Reporter.

E. O. GOODRICH, Publisher.

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\$2 per Annum, in Advance.

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TOWANDA, BRADFORD COUNTY, PA., JUNE 21, 1866.

NUMBER 4.

positively for so many years, and he spoke out, but it was not a sentimental grief. "Eh, but she was fallen away to nothing; she was a perfect nobody." "Small left shall be to carry to the lictus," says she; and she was that sure. But it were a fine birch, a spike, and a sight of vork, and they all spoke as how she were a ver-riable good woman."

And so poor old Lizzie's funeral oration was done.
Rachel Russell was a very pretty girl, of the type common in those parts, small and well-made, with delicate refined features, and what would be called elegance in another class in all her motions and looks. She was an orphan. There is nothing but association in names; no high-born sound was there to any one who heard hers. Russells were exceedingly common about there, and no one saw anything the least incongruous in dirty old Howard the blacksmith, or Stanley the gipsy tinker in the lane.

Old Russell was exceedingly particular about his grandchild; no one was "allowed" to be in the place, and it was so lonely that his task would have seemed easy; but as when a flower comes out in the forest, the bees appear where none were to be seen before, so if there is a pretty girl, those ne'er-do-weels young men will find her out; and poor Russell was sadly put about. It never seemed to occur to him, in his horror at the species, that they were necessary to replenish the supply of old ones, who alone he thought worthy to inherit the earth.

Their nearest neighbor was an old wood-cutter, a widower, whose children had all left him except the youngest, Maurice. He was a tall, well-grown stripling, about one-and-twenty, with a pleasant face, not in the least handsome; with a keen eye for a stag, and the fleetest runner in the parish. He was supposed to help his father in the wood, and if they both combined less lawful callings with their nominal one, No Man's Land did not think the worse of them. Old Lizzie Russell had been very fond of the striving woman who had died of hard work, and Maurice and Rachel had known each other from babies; many were the wood-pecker and jay, the feathers of wood-pecker and jay, that were among her treasures from those old days. And now, if he met her coming home with a bundle from the shop, four miles off, there was no harm in his carrying it for her, or in his helping with a yoke of water from the little well at the bottom of the steep orchard; for he had been scarcely allowed to come within the house since the old woman's death. Ever-anything looked fair for the pair; he had never spoken a word of love to her, however, they were still on their old friendly footing, and old Silas, who did not like the country for misers' roads. Great things have objected in the long run, when—there was a sudden change in the Government, the Ministry resigned, and a number of great people went in and out, with whom Maurice and Rachel did not seem at first to have much to do. There are many clever books written to prove what small causes led to great events; *un vera deca* turned out the Duchess of Marlborough and changed the fate and policy of Europe. My great work shows that great things have a multitude of small tails which they know nothing about. Among a number of charges and cries for reform, there had been an outcry about the malversations of the Forest. The old ranger was dead, and the new Ministry appointed a fresh one, who began his reign as is the fashion of new brooms. The keeper of that part of the district was a very worthy old butler belonging to the last dynasty, who never stirred out after eight o'clock, and knew as much about woodcraft as a cobbler.

He and his wife lived about a mile and a half further in the wood, at a lodge in a most beautiful situation on a hill overlooking the country for miles round. Great steps of wood alternating with wild heathery commons stretched out to the Channel, the blue sea and the beautiful lines of the Isle of Wight beyond—"the Island," as it is fondly called,—and a white sail like a gull's wing here and there. It was surrounded by tufts of beech and holly set on the short green sward, the boughs from which strewed the ground, out in winter as fodder for the deer, who loved and frequented the spot, and were to be seen washing in and out of the glades between the groups of trees which are scattered about as in a magnificent park.

On this pleasant place of much play and little work came the terrible shadow of reform. But abuses were long-lived in those days, and after much talk of stricter management, in a little while matters subsided, and the anticlimax of the magnificent plans of improvement was that the under-keeper was desired to take an assistant.

He was not long in appearing,—one Ralph Leverton, the son of a small farmer a few miles off, shrewdly suspected of having the best possible chance of circumventing the poachers by being well practised in all their ways. He was a very good-looking fellow, tall and straight, with curling black hair, and keen eyes; and in his black velvet coat, and long gaiters, looked the very ideal of a young game-keeper.

He was known to most in the village, but he graduated, as it were, on the first Sunday after his appointment, when the congregation were much disturbed by discussing him outside in the church porch, and watching him how he joined in the hymns.

After church he seemed to think that so great a man might pick his company; and as Rachel was decidedly the prettiest girl there, he joined the old clerk at the first stile, ostensibly to inquire about a deer's run near the house, and walked home with them, Rachel keeping shyly by her grandfather with her prayer-book wrapped in a red pocket handkerchief. The old man, however, did not ask him in when they reached the cottage, and rather fought shy of his new acquaintance.

After that, however, Ralph was constantly in and out; sometimes "would Master Russell give him a cup of mead," or lend him a hammer, or he brought a bit of new paper, only three weeks old, containing some wonderful battle or murder for the erudite clerk.

Rachel did not much like him; but she was very young and innocent; she never looked forwards, he rather amused her; he had seen the great world, had been even as far as "Hampton," and she thought it very good-natured of him to look in on them.

Maurice had been away, selling wood for his father, who was laid up with the rheumatism, and the few times he had been near the clerk's house, he had not "chanced" on Leverton; but one day when he came to the well at the time Rachel generally fetched her water, he saw Ralph saunter slowly out of the house, with his hands in his pockets like an *habitué*, and go whistling up the hill. Poor Maurice was dumb-founded; his holy place, where he was scarcely allowed to enter, to be profaned by such a man; for Leverton's character was not particularly good; and moreover, he regarded the ex-poacher with something of the feelings of a soldier towards a deserter. That evening Rachel did not come to the well; probably Ralph had carried her water for her, and Maurice went home in a towering rage.

He did not manage to see her for the next few days, while he was nursing his wrath to keep it warm. At last one evening she was tripping across the forest, the nearest way home; there was no path, only the aimless tracks of the cows in and out of the holly and thorn thickets, and round the great beech and oak; the long level rays of the sun lay on the tall fern, and touched the beautiful green mossy trunks of the beech, which looked like velvet, the evening shadows crept in and out, and nothing stirred but a squirrel, chattering at her as she passed, or the rustle of the carpet of dead leaves where a hind stole away.

Presently she heard a nearer rustle, and turning, found Maurice at her side; she gave him such a bright look, her face beamed with such genuine pleasure, that his wrath subsided at once.

"Why, Maurice, where ha' ye been this day?" "Out o' sight, out o' mind," said he, sadly; "you've had other things to mind nor mindin' o' me, Rachel." She looked up surprised, and then blushed deeply at the expression in Maurice's face. "He's a been in and out, and in, most days, I da know, Rachel. I'd swaller it, and never make no moan, but that I da know he be na fit for thee; he be a loose hand, a wild chap that fears neither God nor man, and he means no good by thee. Taint 'cause I hate one as ha' ve turned on his own trade, darlin'; there's deeper wrong 'n thisen; as thou da know Ralph Leverton. Do ye love me, Rachel dear?" he said, tenderly and sadly. "I ha' loved thee ever sin' thou wert so high, wild and all my soul and my strength. I've never al'oken at ere a lass like thee. I'd twill all a man mind to make thee a happy life,—God bless thee."

In her sudden terror, she sat down where she stood, among the fern, and covered her face with her hands. As Maurice had been speaking, she remembered her first instinctive repugnance to Leverton; that strange power by which nature perfectly innocent and ignorant of evil detects by instinct what more practised minds often miss; as if endowed with an additional sense for their preservation, if they would but listen to it. Leverton had unconsciously modified his ordinary bold, reckless look and manner when he came near her gentle purity, as you would hardly speak harshly to a fawn, and her first impression had worn off.

A very wise woman once said that she often altered her first impression of a person; and she knew more of a character, or modified her opinion, or was misled, but that she always came back to her truth, when the mind had been quite unprejudiced and the instinct, which is far stronger in women than men, had had fair play.

Poor Rachel's cogitations were not so abstract, though they came to the same end. She instinctively felt that what Maurice said was true; she remembered her early impression against Leverton; could it be possible that she could care for this man? Then came up before her the frank, hearty nature that was standing near her, the loving and tender hand which had been lifted in her little perplexities, and the tears began to start through her fingers. It took a long time, or it seemed so to him, for her little mind, so unpractised in reading its own or others' emotions, to get so far; and poor Maurice standing on thorns watching her, and at last seeing her tears, thought it was all up with him and turned away with a sort of smothered groan.

"Good by, Rachel," he said, and he swore within himself (though in his rude chivalry he thought it unmanly to threaten her with it) that he'd "list next day."

"Bide, Maurice, bide," cried Rachel, leaping up in terror. "I carena naught for you man." "But then you carenaught for me either, Rachel, I'm feared," answered Maurice with a bound back to her side; but his arm round her waist certainly belied him. Rachel, however, did not push it away; on the contrary, she lifted up her little, shy blushing, tearful face for him to kiss,—at least that was the result, the first he had ever given her; and then the two sauntered together into paradise, through that open door still left for poor scrubby earth, as some people consider it.

Then Rachel crept quietly home, and was perfectly unconscious of her grandfather's remarks, answering yes or no at random all the evening, "for the beating of her own heart was all the sound she heard," while she lived that one hour over and over again. Leverton was not long in finding out the difference of her manner. She had never shown him anything more than simple civility, but now she looked flattered instead of amused when he came into the house, and he very soon guessed the cause. Next he dogged her footsteps, and found the two together. Maurice had been working hard to find some settled occupation, when he thought he might go to the old clerk with a better chance of success. One evening Rachel heard his low whistle near the cottage and stole out to hear news of his plans. They lingered just a little too long at the edge of the orchard, bidding good by a little too often, for Leverton passed by the edge of the wood and scowled like the fiend at the sight of Adam and Eve. He went immediately by the back of the house in to the old clerk.

"Do ye know where be Rachel at this mornin', Master Russell?" that young scoundrel Maurice and she be colliging in the orchard at th' stile." Old Silas snubbed out in time to see the parting, and when Rachel turned homeward she met his angry growls, as he seized her arm and dragged her into the cottage, roaring that Maurice should never darken his doorstep, a beggarly fellow, who would never own nought; a chap as were no use to nobody, &c., &c.

Poor Rachel led a sad time of it. Her grandfather hardly let her go out of his sight. Leverton continued to frequent the cottage. Rachel had till now been a mere plaything for spare half-hours; his inclination for her would probably have died away if all had been smooth, but it became very earnest now that she took so much winning. His whole soul was bent upon catching Maurice in some act which might entail a long imprisonment upon him, and so dispose of him for a time. He hated him as an over-bearing nature detests what stands in the path to its will.

Maurice had kept out of the way as much as possible in order that poor Rachel might not suffer, and had continued his earnest search for permanent work which yet should not take him out of the district (which your true forest antichurches hate like death).—One fine autumn Sunday, however, he went up to church, keeping rather apart from the scattered groups out of the different cottages. The church, built of flint with some quoins, stood on a little hill apart from any village, with some beautiful old elms and picturesque oaks round it. The only dwelling in sight was an old farm-house, the remains of a large manor which had belonged to one of the region's lords, on windy nights, without his head (I suppose as an appropriate punishment, in which case the tradition was curious as an indication of feeling in England at the time of his death), drove four headless horses down the hollow lane to the churchyard; he was not pleasant company to meet, and that side of the hill had rather an evil savor. At the bottom of the hill ran a little river with a foot-bridge across it. Beyond lay the few fields of the parsonage, and round in every direction the great forest folding in on all sides. On week-days, it was a most solitary place, on Sunday, however, the rural laborers, who never met on other days, interchanged the gossip of the week, or more often sat in dignified silence, sunning themselves in the porch. The ivy which covered tower and walls with a thick green coat, and even crept through the roof and hung within in long festoons unmindful of rural deans, had a trunk like a tree, and the boughs stuck out three or four feet from the wall. It was clipped up to a certain height, so as to form a shelter or pent-house for the men with their backs leaning against the wall. It was almost as green as an orchard for a young girl to pass this raking fire of eyes into church, as for the squire's daughter to perform her first minutecat at her first ball—the most tremendous exaction which society ever made on a modest young girl.

Rachel was sitting on the tombstone of her grandmother (whom she sorely missed, in a quiet part of the churchyard, just before the service, while the old clerk was busy inspecting the sad and silent, playing with the little Reuben, youngest of the boys of one of her few acquaintances, when Maurice's voice sounded close to her.

"She was a good friend to me," he murmured, looking at the grave; and then turning to her, "I've brought thee a posy, Rachel. I got it from the squire's gardener (this was four miles away). I dunna know what name thou givest thy flowers, but my mother called 'em 'love in idles,' and he put a bunch of purple and yellow pansies with their velvet leaves into her hand. She looked up at me with a very queer look, but she always came back to her truth, when the mind had been quite unprejudiced and the instinct, which is far stronger in women than men, had had fair play.

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over her with a beautiful head upon it; almost all the rest were queer grinning apish faces. (By what strange rule of contraries did our ancestors put such things into their churches? It was evidently the portrait of a queen.—the companion, a Richard II, sadly mutilated was still decipherable,—but Maurice always took it for an angel, and said it was like Rachel, and his prayer that day, if its vague longings had been translated into words, would have read, "Santee Rachele, ora pro me.")

At last the church was "loosed." It was a pretty sight to watch the little rivulets of people streaming in their different directions, over green fields and through wooded glades home; white surplises (the smock frock) and red coats abounded; the flat black silk hats, however, which went with it had even here disappeared into the bonnet.

That evening Maurice's father began upon him about the "powney"; she was growing the old for the bavin's trade; and ye mid get me another in no time, Maurice, if ye were the boy ye was, and had a mind to't. There's a stag of mine, to be found most nights now by the Squab-hollow, and I'd come round with the powder for to carry on him where he's arch-temper in the Pengetio makes his arch-temper in the Vatican frose a very revered old man. His was a shrewder guess at human nature than the usual form given to that worthy; there is certainly no more dangerous or subtle one, and Maurice, stung in the morning by Leverton's gibe, and under the sort of fascination which makes a man of another class spend the day in the wet reeds after a wild duck, or pay £1,000 a year to stalk the red deer in the Highlands, consented to go. For a fortnight after, however, there was a great down-pour of rain, and the nights were dark; moreover Maurice was not anxious to go while he thought Leverton was on the alert. At last, one night the moon was full, the rain had ceased, and the clouds were high, but they went drifting across the heavens with a strong wind in the upper sky. It was a gusty, wild-looking night,—great fleecy masses of enormous size careering along, and making the moon as murky at times as if there were none, though the lower sky and the earth were very still. Maurice did not start from home, the keepers might be upon his trail, so he walked at sunset across the forest by the high road, and as soon as night fell, beat towards the haunt of the stag which he had marked for the last month. He passed over hill and dale, watching the moonlit glades, and the glancing holly-bushes, and the dark masses of shade under the trees; and though without troubling himself much about the picturesque, there was a keen sense of enjoyment in it. At last stalking cautiously a little eminence in the middle of an open heathly part, which the wary deer had chosen for his bed-chamber, in order to be able to see all around, he caught sight of the branching antlers among a herd of deer. He dragged himself nearer and nearer still, and at last fired. The head fell, and he ran rapidly up the hill, the hinds racing off in all directions; he took out his knife to finish the poor thing's life, and began cutting him up, when very low on the still night breeze came the bay of a hound. "They've awoke the bloodhound out after me," thought Maurice, will a thrill, not exactly of terror, but of a more terrible sort, he told of the hound, and he was only brought out on great occasions.

There was no use in attempting to get the stag off now; and he set off at a long trot towards running water, and a frequent road to destroy the scent. He ran up a little stream, but the rain had filled it, and it was unpleasantly deep, and prevented his getting on. He passed into a byre, where some lean cows had been driven in, for the same reason; still on and on, for he could hear the low bay of the hound growing nearer and nearer; evidently he was upon the scent, and was summoning his master. The perspiration ran down Maurice's face, and his blood curdled, for he was beginning to grow faint with fatigue; the horrible brute's dreaded and dreadful voice was the only sound except the wind that reached his ear; and besides the physical dread of being torn by a beast which even a brave man shrinks from, the thought came over him with a force he never had felt before, that if ever Leverton caught and put him in prison, what a chance it was giving him with Rachel's grandfather; and he ground his teeth at his own folly. He might have thought of this before, says sage reader. Yes, but Maurice was not the first or the last young man who has eaten sour grapes, and whose teeth has been consequently set on edge.

His strength was very nearly gone. He, the swift-foot of the village, was reduced to a pace that a child might have overtaken, when he suddenly remembered that the river was so full with the rain, that it could not be crossed save at the bridge far below; and that, if he could but jump a certain place which he well knew, where the over-arching banks had narrowed the channel, he should be safe for a time from the human part of his pursuers. No man but himself he knew would dare such a leap, and he could do battle with the best as from a vantage-ground. He felt very uncertain whether he could cross it himself, exhausted as he was; but it was his last chance, and he plunged short off to the right. The river was overflowing its banks on either side; a dark mass of troubled water, bringing with it matted clods of grass and boughs of trees broken away in the storm; and he was in a moment when it reached the narrow, it foamed and tumbled and swirled into whirlpools, the ground about was wet and swampy with rain. It was an ugly leap, and Maurice felt that if he missed his footing, he must be lost; for neither man nor beast could live in such a torrent. He had generally, too, taken the jump from the other side, where the ground was a little the highest; here he would have to jump up, which increased the difficulty, and he stood for a second or two measuring the distance. The night-wind sighed among the branches; everything was still but the turbid rushing water. He had just time by coming down that way; and he must jump or be taken.

He sprang at last in desperation. The ground was so soaked that, in spite of the run which he took, he had hardly any impetus; he caught at a sapling as his foot touched the other side; both it and the

ground gave way, but a friendly beech-root below held good, and he fell foremost by main strength on shore, and on the right side. He was hardly sensible for the next few minutes; and when he rose, panting he could scarcely bear to go near the foaming brink again; but it was his best hope, and he encoined himself in the roots of the beech, with his gun reversed in his hand. He could hear the growl of the hound, now on the crest of the knoll, whence he had just himself come down; the clouds were gathering again over the moon, but enough light was left to see the huge and dreaded brute come in sight at his slow, unerring trot and pause on the edge before making his spring, for he saw his man. Now or never. As he sprang, Maurice amid a tremendous blow at him with the butt-end of his gun, and with a frightful yell he fell into the boiling seething whirlpool. Maurice shook from head to foot with rage and fatigue, and a sort of misery at his deed; his sportsman nature could not bear to have killed a dog as he would a wild beast; it was a sort of high treason in woodcraft; and besides, he remembered how Rachel used to fondle him. The dog never reappeared, and sadly he turned home, footsore and completely beat.

His father, who had gone out with the "powney," had roared home before him, and was anxiously on the watch. When the keepers came up to the house, both father and son were in bed; but, although Leverton felt certain that Maurice was the culprit, no one had seen him, there was not the slightest evidence against him; and as Leverton had taken the dog without leave, he was not anxious to make much fuss about its death, lest the blame should fall on him. So the thing blew over, but he hated Maurice all the worse for the failure of his night's work.

It had been a great lesson for Maurice himself. He began to mistrust his father, to see that whatever might be the abstract right and wrong of poaching, it never would enable him to win Rachel; and that he was playing his rival's game with the old clerk most satisfactorily. Regular work was slack, but to keep himself out of mischief, he hired himself as carekeeper for a farmer four miles off, and the winter passed quietly away. He was now hardly ever at home, for he was off by daylight and home long after dark; but somehow Leverton was convinced that he and Rachel met if only for a minute at a time.

With all his care he could not come upon them, but sometimes she looked a little brighter, and her steps were more light, and then Leverton, whose senses were sharpened by jealousy, could have told pretty nearly to an hour when they had come together.

It was a long and hard winter to poor Rachel, but spring came at last, and Maurice's six months were over; his master wanted him no more, and he returned home for a time.

It was a beautiful May. The apple and cherry orchards were sheets of blossom, May and yellow broom and "fuzzen" scented the air, the ground was a perfect carpet of anemones, blue harebells, and primroses.

"While the blackbird and the thrush,
Good morrow said from brake and bush,"
and Maurice and Rachel, like the birds, could not but be glad too in their spring, and feel convinced that all must go right with their love. "Look at you," he said, as they stood hand in hand one day, "under the hawthorn in the dale." He pointed to a chaffinch flying with a long straw in its beak to make its nest. "They've a had a hard winter too, but it be all come right with us, and we're building their nest-ees as we shall soon our, Rachel." She smiled a happy smile and turned to go. "What art thou adoin' of to-morrow?" said Maurice. "Art goin' to Mrs. Strange's?" "No, not to-morrow, only Thursday." "And what time wilt thou be comin' whom, for my fever be workin' up by Long-lands and allus come back that way if so be I can. I love the grove, and I'd be there to take thee back at any time thou bidst." They settled the hour, and she tripped off home. There had been another listener.

On Thursday Rachel made good haste with her work; Mrs. Strange had never known her so anxious to have done. She was rather a fussy old body, however, and it was past five before Rachel was able to get away. She had hurried herself by her haste, and only breathed freely when she came to the grove of tall beech.

The beauty of the forest in spring is indescribable: the sort of pink bloom on the oak before the leaves come out, the bright green of the young beech-buds just bursting before the opening, and the curled brackling before it opens, looking like a nest of bishop's croziers; nothing else grows under a beech, but wherever there is an opening, there lies a whole garland of flowers, rare orchises, and crowfoot and violets, and tall thorns covered with showers of bloom crowning the whole. It was here that Maurice had met her nearly two years before, and told her that he loved her; and for some time she was so occupied with her own thoughts, that she did not find the time long. At least it grew quite late, there was no Maurice, the shadows began to creep fast under the trees, the sun was almost down, and she was growing nervous, when she saw a number of cows on their leisurely road home, poking their noses into a thicket not far off, snuffing the ground, galloping off again, and returning to look once more, as in the manner of cows, who are very curious by nature. She could see the herd-boys, trying to get them home, at last go and examine for themselves, and heard their exclaim of wonder: one raced off to the nearest cottage, the smallest, little Reuben, saw her and ran up, great in his importance at having a story to tell.

"O Rachel, it's blood, there's quite a pool of blood, and it's all trampled and torn round, only praps the cows has made that; and Rachel, Tom says that both Leverton and Maurice is missin' sin yesterday evening." The keeper was a collie of him all about the village to-day, and old Master Lovel wanted Maurice badly, for the wood cuttin' could not be finished without her. Rachel sat down in mute terror, too miserable even to think out her own thought.

CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION, TOWANDA.

BROTHERS—In presenting to you this first Annual Report of the operations of our Association, I do not doubt express the feelings of all, in saying that we have great reason for gratitude to God for the way in which he has led us. Although our history, as an organization, carries us but one year back, I cannot but feel that the real beginning of our work was when eight years since, a few of our number instituted what was a new thing in Towanda, a Young Men's Union Prayer Meeting, and if it was not foreign to the immediate object of this report, it might be interesting to hear the history of this encouragement, the meetings, and how it would sometimes arise as to the prospect of continuing it, when week after week but two or three would meet together. And how it was continued, and in answer to the prayers there made, its attendance so increased as to make our present organization advisable.

Whatever doubts any of us may have had one year ago, in regard to the advantages proposed to be gained by giving to our quiet prayer meeting the more permanent and aggressive character of a Young Men's Christian Association, can surely have no place in our minds, when we look at the work accomplished during the past year, and know that much of it, humanly speaking, would not have been done but for its timely action.

Early in the year the Board of Managers were fortunate in securing our present rooms, and were soon able, through the liberality of our citizens, to furnish and make them a pleasant and profitable place of resort, by keeping upon our tables a good selection from the various secular and religious newspapers and magazines, can surely have no place in our minds, when we look at the work accomplished during the past year, and know that much of it, humanly speaking, would not have been done but for its timely action.

In this connection I would call your attention particularly to the important duties of the Committee on Strangers. As the population of our town increases, great results may be looked for from the work of this Committee, whose duty it is to acquaint themselves with young men coming among us as strangers, and endeavor to throw around them good influences.

I am pleased to report that a fair beginning has been made for a Library. A few books have been bought, and a valuable collection of about one hundred volumes, selected from the library of the late Rev. JULIUS FOSTER, has been presented to the Association by his family. While we cannot hope to make large additions by purchase for some time to come, much may be done by the members of the Association towards enlarging and giving to our library a more permanent character.

A partial Course of Lectures was maintained during the fall, the members of the many interruptions and disappointments, the Lecture Committee are obliged to present an unfavorable report financially, although great credit is due them for their untiring efforts to make the course, in this respect, a success.

As will be seen by the report of the Treasurer, our finances are not in as prosperous a condition as could be wished. The expenditures, the past year, have been large, amounting, for the various purposes of the Association, to over one thousand dollars, and the members of the Treasurer, amounting to about one hundred dollars, remain unpaid for want of funds. I trust that some plan may be adopted which will make our revenue sufficient for all ordinary expenses. The recent amendment to the Constitution provides but partially for this, and unless some additional provision be made, I fear that my successor will be obliged to report as I do, a deficit.

The regular Sunday Evening Prayer Meeting of the Association, has been well sustained throughout the year, and the petition so often made that the numbers of those who loved to meet with us for prayer might be increased from among the young men of Towanda, has been gloriously answered. It became evident during the fall and early part of the winter, from the increasing interest in our meetings, that we were being prepared for a more than ordinary outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

That precursor of nearly all revivals, the awakening of God's people, was clearly manifest. And although we thought our faith was strong that souls were about to be converted, how weak it was in comparison with the perfect avalanche of blessings that came upon us.

A short time before the week of prayer in January, it was decided to hold a series of Union Meetings, and to invite the Rev. E. P. HAMMON, whose efforts had been so wonderfully blessed in other places to conduct them. The co-operation of the Pastors of our several churches was gained, and with the commencement of his labors, began the greatest religious awakening and ingathering of souls ever known in our town. Both old and young were about to be converted, how weak it was in comparison with the perfect avalanche of blessings that came upon us.

I have been unable to ascertain with any accuracy, the whole number of converts, for the interest was not confined to the Borough, but extended throughout the entire county. Scarcely a village within its bounds but was in some degree concerned in it.

One marked feature of the work, was, that much of it was accomplished through the agency of a constant effort to sustain our organization in its appropriate work, that its influence may be felt here as a power for good. Remembering always, that while the means are with us, the results are with God, and be ever looking to Him who giveth the increase for his blessing upon what we try to do.

N. N. BETTS, Jr., President.