

INTERESTING EXPERIENCES

MEDICAL... *D.F. 10*
MISSIONARY
WORKER, G. White Research Center

NASHVILLE, - TENNESSEE. **FILE COPY**

ADDRESS BY L. A. HANSEN,
IN THE TABERNACLE, BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN,
MAY 28, 1904, AFTER WHICH A DONATION
OF \$200 WAS TAKEN UP.

STENOGRAPHICALLY REPORTED.

It is now seven years since Mrs. Hansen and I went to Nashville to begin medical missionary work. We did not go in response to a demand on the part of citizens who had raised a fund to establish a branch sanitarium, as has been the case in some places; we went in response to the earnest appeals from Sister White in the *Review*, calling for workers to go to that "most needy and sadly neglected field in the world." In these appeals it was stated that medical missionary work would afford the best means for gaining entrance to the people, breaking down walls of prejudice, and opening the way for other truths and other lines of work. We have found this to be indeed so in our experience, and I will speak of some things along these lines, not to call attention to individuals connected with the work, but to glorify God for his many providences.

When we went to Nashville, the only representation there was of our work in any way was a small but faithful company of believers. There was not anything there in the way of a sanitarium interest. Of course we did not foresee the future development of the work in that city. We did not know that it was to be a center of the work in the South. But it seems now as though the Lord was leading out to have the

first steps taken in establishing an important center. Not long ago Elder Butler stated, in Conference, that when they began the publishing work, they found among the citizens a good welcome and a friendly attitude, due, he thought, to the influence of the Sanitarium work that had been done.

We began our work by house-to-house visits, first calling on the physicians to let them know we were prepared to give treatment at residences. This gave us entrance to some leading homes in a manner that made us many good friends. The success of this house-to-house work was such, by the blessing of the Lord, that it soon created a demand for treatment rooms. We had no means with which to start, but the Medical Missionary Association advanced us three or four hundred dollars, and in one way or another we were able to fit up a very humble beginning. This, however, was the beginning of a good work, that has gradually grown until now it is recognized by our brethren and sisters as being an important enterprise in the advancement of the truth.

It was particularly the great need that made an opening for the work. There were many sick people. There were many who needed instruction in the principles of health. Wherever there is such a need and there is some one who can give the help needed, there you can begin medical missionary work. There was plenty of need, and only two of us, so we had all that we could do. We have had no time up to the present to sit down and take our ease. We have never had to sit in our office chair waiting for something to turn up.

Our city treatment rooms began, as I say, very humbly. We had but few facilities, few furnishings, not even matting to cover our floors. But people seemed to bear with our poverty, and recognize that we had something that did not consist altogether in facilities. The work ad-

vanced from one thing to another. We opened a food store and supply department, from which we ship foods and sanitary supplies to all parts of the South. We had to enlarge our quarters from time to time. A dining-room was opened to the public.

The influence of this work from the very beginning has been to break down prejudice. As you know, Tennessee was at one time the hot-bed of Sunday legislation and persecution of Seventh-day Adventists. We had to meet much unfavorable sentiment. But as we have been enabled to reach all classes of people in a way that answered their needs, walls of prejudice, thick and high, have been broken down.

We have found all classes in need of help. I might mention a case or two. One Sabbath, when appointing cottage meetings for the following week, an old man and his wife, strangers, asked that we hold a meeting at their house. They said they were very poor, but could give us sitting room. It fell to me to hold the meeting the following Thursday night. It was raining hard and I was alone. I found the place, a single room in an old colored tenement house, in a very poor district. These were white people; their living in this place showed that they were indeed poor. I knocked at the door and the woman answered, crying out,—

“O Doctor, you have come at last.”

I said, “No, this is not the doctor. This is Brother Hansen. Don’t you remember we were to have a meeting here to-night?”

She replied, “Well, we can’t have the meeting. My husband has been sick nearly all week, and I have been trying to get the doctor for two days from the hospital, but he doesn’t come.”

I went inside. The only article of furniture in the room was an old cot which a colored neighbor had loaned them. Some empty boxes served for seats and a table, and an old smoking lamp gave a dim light. The old man lay on a

pallet of rags and straw on the floor. He could scarcely speak. I stooped down and asked him what the trouble was. In a very feeble voice he told me. I put my satchel aside, in which were my Bible and hymn book. I might have said, if I had been a worker who was prepared only to pray and read with him, "We can have prayer and a song or two, since I am here." But that man was in need of something else. Of course, a prayer and song would not have hurt him; it might have helped him; but I believe we have the example of Jesus, the great medical missionary, in sometimes doing for the bodily needs before we can do much for the spiritual needs. A man who is cold, or hungry, or suffering pain, can better appreciate spiritual help when he has had physical relief.

So I hurriedly went out and telephoned for supplies. After a few hours of treatment he felt much better. As I was preparing to leave, he said, "Brother Hansen, now we can have the prayer meeting." And then we did have one, and a praise meeting too.

Again: I was called by telephone to one of the prominent colleges in the city. I was ushered into the president's bedroom, where he lay, surrounded by his family, and with all the comforts that his means could afford. Three of the best physicians in the city were waiting on him. I was told that one of his troubles was paralysis of the throat. Being unable to get relief, it had occurred to him that we might do something for him with massage or electricity or some other means. After about fifteen minutes of treatment we tried him with bits of ice, to see if he could swallow, and he swallowed them. "O," he said, "that is the first thing I have swallowed for thirty-six hours." A little later he was able to swallow some milk. Then he began praising the Lord, saying, "Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, that is the first thing I have tasted for forty-eight hours."

At another time I was called to a prominent infirmary where a man was just at the point of death. He was an unbeliever, but it so happened that I had waited on his father in his last moments, and through a rather remarkable experience had opportunity to reach the unbelieving son with some gospel principles. Now, as he lay at death's door, with his family and physicians about him, he sent for me to come and pray with him. Those great physicians, their names prominent in the medical world, stepped aside for a humble prayer service.

These instances show a little of the opportunities that come to the medical missionary; what openings for working for the Lord; working for people at a time when work counts, when a word or a prayer means much to them.

We have had much prejudice to meet on the part of physicians. There are several medical colleges in Nashville, and about 350 physicians. These men are not all religious; some are quite irreligious. One of them told me an incident to illustrate the attitude of many toward religion. A leading surgeon, prominent in the South and in connection with one of the medical schools and quite well known throughout the country, was called to a neighboring town to perform an operation. The patient was a godly woman. With anxiety about her case, just as he was about to begin, she asked, "Doctor, won't you offer a word of prayer?" He straightened himself up and said, "Madam, if you want prayer, you must send for a preacher." She asked, "Don't you pray?" He replied, "No, I'm a surgeon." "Well," she said, "then you can never operate on me." And he had to pack up his instruments and return home.

The one telling me this added, "I'll bet that woman got well if a blacksmith operated on her, a woman with such a faith as that." The surgeon came back and told the experience to his students at clinic as a joke. Thus many are

taught to regard God lightly, or even not to believe in him at all. And they have to wait on the sick, perhaps at their last moments, when they may feel that they are coming face to face with the Lord; when the next thing they will know perhaps will be the judgment. Oh, what an opportunity there is, brethren and sisters, for those who can go into a sickroom, perhaps a death chamber, and not only give help that will relieve suffering and perhaps save life, but can give words of consolation and help to prepare them to meet death much better than if stupefied with drugs.

When I called on this man who would not pray, and handed him my letter of introduction from Dr. Kellogg, he did not even look up from his desk, but tossed the letter aside, saying, "We have no use for you whatever."

At this time we were conducting a school of health, at which there were present a few colored women. They could not, of course, attend the school as students, but they could come in as helpers, and learn just the same. One of them was a patient of this doctor who would not pray. Becoming interested in our principles, she consulted him about going to the Battle Creek Sanitarium. He said, "If you go there, they will just starve you to death, and throw you into the lake," and he frightened her out of going. She said no more about it until a year later, when she went to him again and said, "Doctor, I am getting no better. I believe I will go to Battle Creek."

"Well," he replied, "I believe that is the place for you after all. I believe Dr. Kellogg is the only man that can help you. The reason that Dr. Kellogg can help you is that he prays for his patients."

"Why don't you pray for yours?" she asked.

He replied, "I haven't time."

"You surely are not any busier than Dr. Kellogg."

"Well, to be candid with you, Dr. Kellogg is working for the souls of people, and I am working for money."

Then he said something that was very encouraging to us, when we heard of it, coming as it did from that man. He said, "And these persons here in the city are working for the good of people, and not for money." I thought if such a man as that will take notice of the simple work of two nurses to say that much about it, then it is certainly good to be engaged in such a work. He has since sent us several patients.

Another prominent physician I called on had little to say, but rather turned me away. One of his patients, the most prominent woman in the city at that time, was seriously ill, and her progress was watched with much interest by her large circle of friends. As she did not make very rapid recovery, some of her friends, who had taken treatment of Mrs. Hansen, urgently advised that she have Mrs. Hansen give her massage treatment. The patient requested her physician to do this, but he refused, saying, "I have my own nurses. They can give massage." Finally the patient's mother decided to have her come anyway. Then the doctor said he would see about it, and called me up by telephone, asking me to come to his office.

After questioning me about our work he said, "Yes, I know all about you Sanitarium people. They have some missionaries in town now, getting up a school of health, as they call it." I did not tell him we were organizing a school of one hundred and seventy of the best people in the city, to be held in one of the leading churches that was given us for two weeks by the minister and board of trustees. "But," he said, "I have a patient that I want your wife to take, but I do not want her to say anything about the Battle Creek Sanitarium, Battle Creek diet, or anything else of the kind."

The results in the case were such as to give

us favor with many more persons, and opened the way for more patients from this doctor, some of whom, we learned, were put on Battle Creek diet. Later on the doctor himself took a course of treatment with us, and finally came to the Battle Creek Sanitarium. We have worked on in this way, one physician after another sending us patients, until now we have more or less co-operation from about thirty of the physicians.

Another incident to show how prejudice gives way: Our mission for the poor became, after a year or so, rather burdensome financially, there not being many interested in its support, and we thought we would call upon the citizens for help. So a committee called upon some of the business men, but at each place they were referred to the Secretary of the Relief Society with the statement that all relief work was done through that channel. So they went to her, but she told them plainly that she had no use for our work, saying, "We attend to this work through our society; there is no need of your mission, and I do not think there is any use for you Seventh-day Adventists anyway."

The following winter was a very cold one— 13° below zero. The coal dealers ran out of coal, and for a time we had a coal famine so severe that some persons had to break up their furniture for fuel. Much suffering prevailed, especially among the poor. A friend of ours secured a carload of coal from the president of one of the railroads, and donated it to us and the secretary of the Relief Society, to be distributed among the poor. We arranged to work together in the matter. She furnished names and addresses, and I looked after sending it out. We secured teams and drivers from the city brewerymen, whose business was also shut up on account of the cold weather. That made quite a combination,—that prejudiced secretary, a Seventh-day Adventist missionary, and a brewer, engaged in missionary work. But it worked all right.

The following summer this secretary and her visiting nurse were both broken in health. They came to us and she said, "Brother Hansen, for I can call you 'brother,' I can go to any physician for advice and help, but I am coming to you because I know you are a Christian, and will advise me honestly." She told their troubles, and then asked, "Shall we stay here and take treatment with you, or shall we go to the country for rest?" I advised her to go to the country, as I thought that was best. She thanked me, and they started away, but had not gone far before the nurse became so sick that she had to bring her back and leave her with us. She told the nurse, "Now you need not be afraid; you are with Christian people, who will take good care of you." And that has been her attitude ever since. Then when she sprained her knee and later broke her arm, she came to us for treatment. Just before leaving Nashville she called me up by telephone, and said, "Our visiting nurse now has too much to do, and we need another nurse, but we do not want any but one of your nurses. Can you supply us with one? I want her to stay with us on regular salary."

When we wished to open up treatment rooms, the only suitable building to be had was one belonging to a Congressman who was not friendly to us. It was already occupied, but the tenant was willing to sublease to us, if the owner would agree to it. I visited him, but he turned me down at once, saying, "I don't know anything about you, and besides, I have a good tenant, and do not wish to change." But we persevered, and he made investigations of our work, receiving favorable replies. Some of his relatives had been patients of ours. Final arrangements for the lease were to be finished by one Friday, but he was not quite ready, and told me to come the next day. I told him I could not come the next day, as that was the Sabbath. He said, "And

so you are Seventh-day Adventists. That settles the whole business. I won't have anything to do with it," and he called us a bad kind of Seventh-day Adventists. "I won't have it in my building at all." But we secured the building after considerable delay.

Well, he went off to Congress, and when he returned he came in one day to see us. He was very much pleased at the change in the appearance of his building. I persuaded him to take a complimentary treatment, and I took opportunity to make it a good long one and to have a good talk with him. When he was through, he felt like a different man in more ways than one. He said, "And *this* is what you do here. And you close on Saturday and open on Sunday. If there is anything you could do on either Sabbath or Sunday, I think it certainly would be this kind of work." This was Sunday, too, by the way. He went down town, and sent us more patients that day. And that man has done all he could for us ever since. When he went to Congress again, he assured me that if the Sunday question came up he would remember us there.

Thus we have been getting these things before prominent people. We have something that will interest all classes, from our mission work in the poorer districts to our work among the people of influence. And, brethren, I believe it is our privilege to aim high. God has given us a message that we can present to anybody. Now is the time to reach people of influence, if we expect them to favor us later on.

But it has not been all smooth sailing. Some of our financial difficulties have not been small. We have not had a phenomenal success. Reforms of this kind do not go with a boom in the South. We are to-day getting patients who have been studying the matter ever since we have been there. The people are conservative. Nashville has been said to be the most conservative city in the country. One doctor said, "They

will come when they hurt." They have not come fast enough to enable us to meet our current expenses and have something besides, and sometimes it has been difficult even to meet the expenses.

Down there, when we rent a house, we have to sign notes for the entire time that we rent it. Once I gave notes for four and a half years, at \$100 a month, \$5,400. The notes are put in the bank for collection, and if you do not pay them when due, judgment is taken against you just the same as in failure to meet any other note. One winter it had been getting harder and harder each month for us to meet the rent. As soon as one month's rent was paid, we had to begin to save for the next. We had to count our nickels and pennies pretty closely. One month it came down to the last hour of the last day, and counting every cent we had we found we did not have enough. That was a time of test for us that we had not yet had.

As we talked the matter over, we said, "We have dedicated this work to God. We believe that it is his will that it should be supported. From time to time he has given us what we needed. Now we have not the money. It is not simply a question of the payment or the failure to pay this amount. It means to us, Can't our faith take hold of God, and carry us through even such a small matter as paying rent?" I went out on the street to see if I could not meet some one that might be owing us, and I did see one or two, until finally, just a few minutes before bank closing time, counting it again we thought we had the exact amount.

I hurried with it to the bank. The clerk counted it, and then counted it again, and handing it back said, "There is not enough, it lacks ten cents." What should I do? I knew nothing but to turn sadly homeward. Serious questions were in my mind. I thought, "Have we come here in the name of the Lord? Does the Lord

mean to sustain us, or are we doing only our own work, and are we to be left on our own resources?" As I reached home and began to tell my wife about it, she handed me fifteen cents that she had just received for a package of granose biscuits. I ran to the bank and entered just as the bell rang for closing. So we got the rent paid in time. That was the closest shave we ever had. But that is about how it goes financially.

The demand for enlargement has grown from year to year. At first we had not a single helper, but had to do ourselves all that there was to do. I have washed the front windows at eleven o'clock at night to keep from being seen by our patients, because down there all such work as that is supposed to be the work of colored porters. But, anyway, with those meager facilities and in that small situation, the demand kept growing for something more. The time came when we saw that we would have to have a place where we could take in out-of-town patients and boarders. But we did not have the money with which to move. We could barely pay our rent as it was. It was a big question, but we laid it before the Lord.

The way opened for us to sell the lease on that place at a time of the year that was most favorable for our moving, and at a figure that enabled us to meet the moving expenses, and have enough left to provide additional facilities. Then came the question of securing another building. It was not the rental season, and there was only one building to be had, and that unsuitable and in an out-of-the-way place. We felt the Lord would not want us to go backwards, but to move forward, and that the best would not be any too good. The way for a better building did not seem to open, and we finally had but a few hours in which to decide on this single house or close up the work. In glancing over the newspaper, too worried really to read, my eye caught

a paragraph referring to the sale of a prominent building that had been occupied forty-five years by a well-known family, and been favorably known to all. It was well adapted for the needs of our work. We had often expressed the wish, "If we could only have that building," but had supposed that too much to expect.

The man who had bought it was a very wealthy and close man. I called on him at his fine country home. My wife said before starting, "You pray, and I'll pray too. If the Lord wants us to have the house, he can impress the man's heart." I laid before him the real character of our work, telling him of its missionary objects, and then offered him the privilege of helping in this good work by giving us as favorable terms as possible on his house. He smiled and thanked me for the "privilege," but said it was a matter of business with him. A number of other persons were after the building, and he wished to do as well as possible.

After a month of experience that tried our faith we were finally able to make terms. The last day I saw him, to make final arrangements, he said, "I was impressed all the time that you were to have that place." He then told me of a firm that had offered him \$4,000 more than we for the lease, if he would make a slight change in the building of putting in a skylight. But something impressed that man to let us have the building. I believe it was the Spirit of God. We were told by persons who heard we were trying to get the house, "You will have a pretty hard time of it. He will not do anything for you, not even put on a door lock." But he painted the house and papered it, letting us select the paper, put in several doors and windows, and did everything we asked of him.

We got the house for five years, and got it fairly well fitted for business. The newspapers gave very favorable notice of the move, one speaking in glowing terms of our "elaborate

quarters," and stating that we had all the appliances known to modern science, and so forth. I suppose we did have some things better than anything else there, such as the electric-light bath, sprays, etc. But anyway we felt that it was by the blessing of the Lord that we got into that eighteen-room house as we did, without a cent of help from outside.

We soon had a demand for a country place—another big proposition; more rent, more facilities, more expenses to meet. It is fashionable to have a country place there, and those things come high. But it seemed very essential to the work to have a place out of the city, so we took the matter to the Lord. Within one week we had secured a favorable location at a reasonable rental.

We got a couple of family rooms furnished. We needed furniture for patients' rooms. Then there fell due a note for \$200 that must be paid at once. It happened that a patient came to us who was recommended from Skodsborg, Denmark, and we made an agreement for a year, securing the amount in advance. This gave us enough to pay the \$200 and get the furnishings for another patient's room. No more had we gotten the necessary furnishings than in came another patient to occupy it. Then we got another room ready, and along came another patient for that.

In this way we have had to get along, putting in a little here and there, and making it go the best we could. God has supplied our needs, not our wants, and we have found that it is just as much his blessing to make fifty cents do the work of a dollar as it is to give us the whole dollar.

Now then we come to offer you a share in this work. You can't perhaps go South yourself, but you can help just the same. The workers who do go must have something to do with. They can't make bricks without straw. We have

now a family of good workers, who are every one taking hold of the work with consecration and genuine missionary spirit.

About six months ago the work was blessed in having Dr. O. M. Hayward and his good wife connect with it. These persons are most capable workers. They have already given years of their lives to the work in the South. For a long time the doctor has worked faithfully against obstacles, with but very few facilities. His time and energy would be worth much more to the cause if he could have something more to do with and not have to work to such disadvantage. With proper equipment and means he would be able to place the Sanitarium work at Nashville upon the basis that is demanded to give it influence in the scientific world.

We have a great field. With our training school for nurses we are hoping to be able to prepare workers right there. It is better to do that than to have them go elsewhere for training, or even to depend altogether on helpers from elsewhere. We have many applications from persons now who wish to prepare themselves for work in that field.

We are hoping also soon to publish our Southern health journal, low priced and in plain, simple language, as well as small health leaflets. This is greatly needed, and has been under contemplation for some time, but on account of lack of means has been held up.

The work, until very recently, has had no help at all from our people. None of the means going South has gone into it. The Southern Union Conference has now taken hold to push the work, in response to urgent instruction from Sister White regarding Nashville sanitarium work. It has been pointed out that this is to be a center of the work in the South, that when it is established it will strengthen, settle, and establish the work in other places, such as Graysville, Huntsville, and so forth. Also, it is an important place

because of the many large educational institutions that are located there. Nashville is called the "Athens of the South." Here are hundreds of teachers and thousands of students from all parts. We are reaching many of these. They learn of our principles, and in turn carry them to their homes, thus spreading the truth in a most successful manner.

Our institution is known as a Seventh-day Adventist institution. In no way have we been afraid to let this be known. I could speak of cases that have accepted the Sabbath and other points through their connection with the Sanitarium.

I am glad to tell you who are the members of our Sanitarium Board. We think we have a good board, especially because of those men on it who have had such long experience in the truth and are prepared to give good counsel. Elders Geo. I. Butler, S. N. Haskell, and N. W. Allee, and Brethren I. A. Ford and B. W. Spire, with Dr. Hayward and myself, make up the board. The board has determined that it will not erect large buildings, create big debts, or move any faster than the means in hand will allow, believing that if we make a plain statement of the situation to our people, and they see that we are dependent upon them, they will come to our help.

I could spend much time now telling you of our needs. They are many. The General Conference has voted us means, but we must get the money ourselves, as they do not have it for us. We are now trying to get it. Don't you want to help? Don't you want a part in that work? The responsibility of this work is upon all our people, and unless they do their part, unless you do yours, the work will suffer.

We have pledge blanks for those who do not have the ready money. You may fill them out for such time as you are sure you can meet them. And may the Lord bless you in doing your part.