

TEN YEARS' REVIEW.

WOMAN'S BOARD OF MISSIONS OF THE INTERIOR.


BY MRS. ELIZABETH E. HUMPHREY.

Thirty-eight names thus stand on our missionary roll, but there was one more. In April, 1873, Mrs. Thomas L. Riggs stood among us with her face toward the Dakotas, and there is recorded a vote of sisterly affection and sympathy, saying "Although not permitted to contribute to her support, we take pleasure in calling her one of our missionaries." As we looked upon her in the glowing beauty of her fresh consecration, we knew how much was meant by the words of that father in Maine, who had just bidden her good-bye, saying, "I have nothing too good to give to the Lord." At each subsequent glimpse of that face, as the years went on, growing more tenderly lovely, with the beauty of the Lord upon her, we felt still more strongly that she was ours in the great help she was giving us, and we mourned the loss of one of the choicest and dearest when word came, last August, that little motherless Theodore was "praying the dear Father to keep him from crying for mamma."

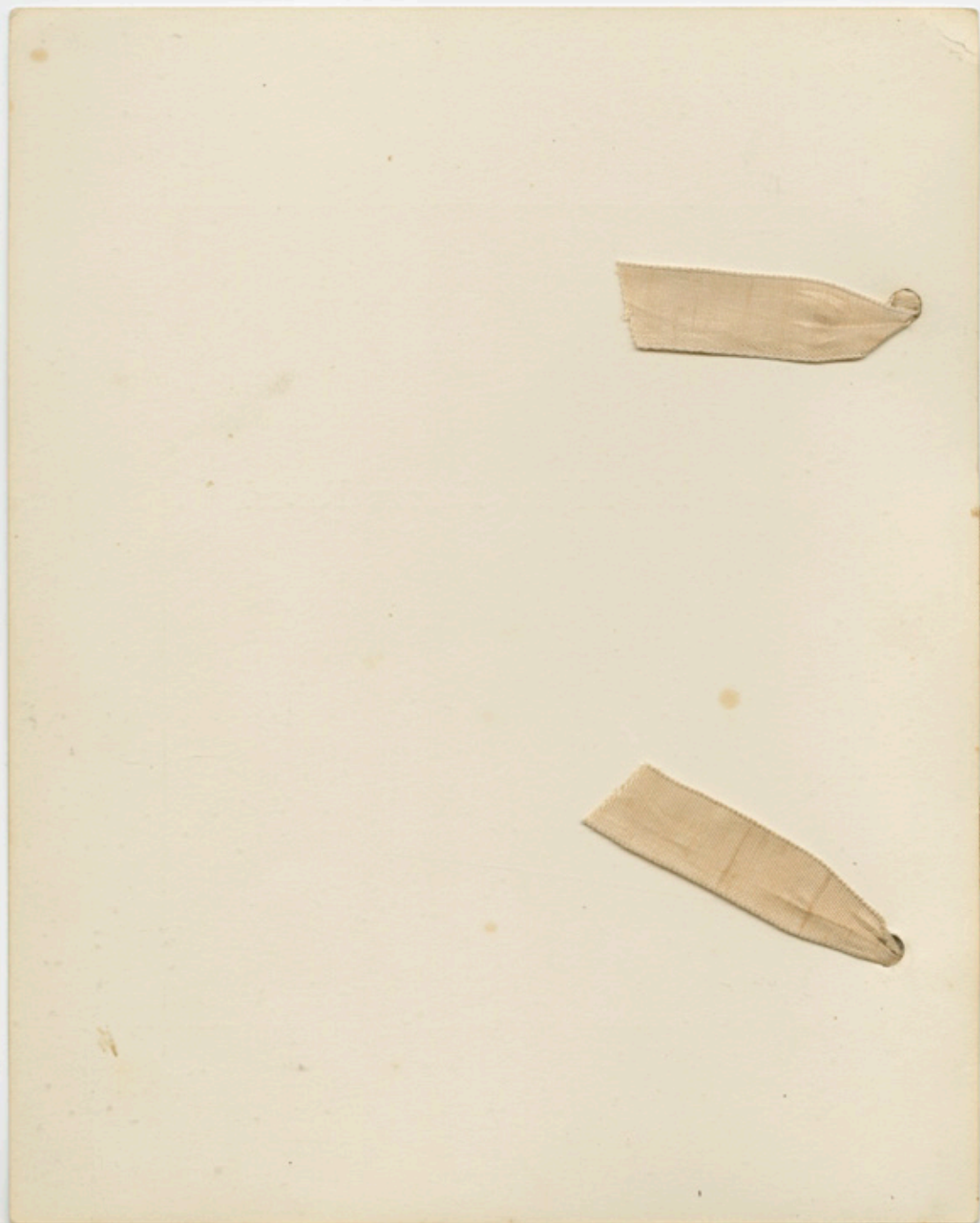
Mrs. Thomas C. Doremus, of New York, attempted with Mr. Abeel, a similar work in this country, but God's set time had not yet come. For a quarter of a century she carried that plan in her head and in her heart, till helped by Mrs. Mason's report of opening zenanas, she made another attempt, and the result was the Woman's Union Missionary Society of 1861. It was a grand dawning in this country of the idea that women might work directly for women abroad. It could not have come earlier. There was need of the developing of woman's power that came through the blessed ministry of hospital service. This address was listened to WITH HIGHLY INTEREST.

THURSDAY MORNING.—LIFE AND LIGHT.

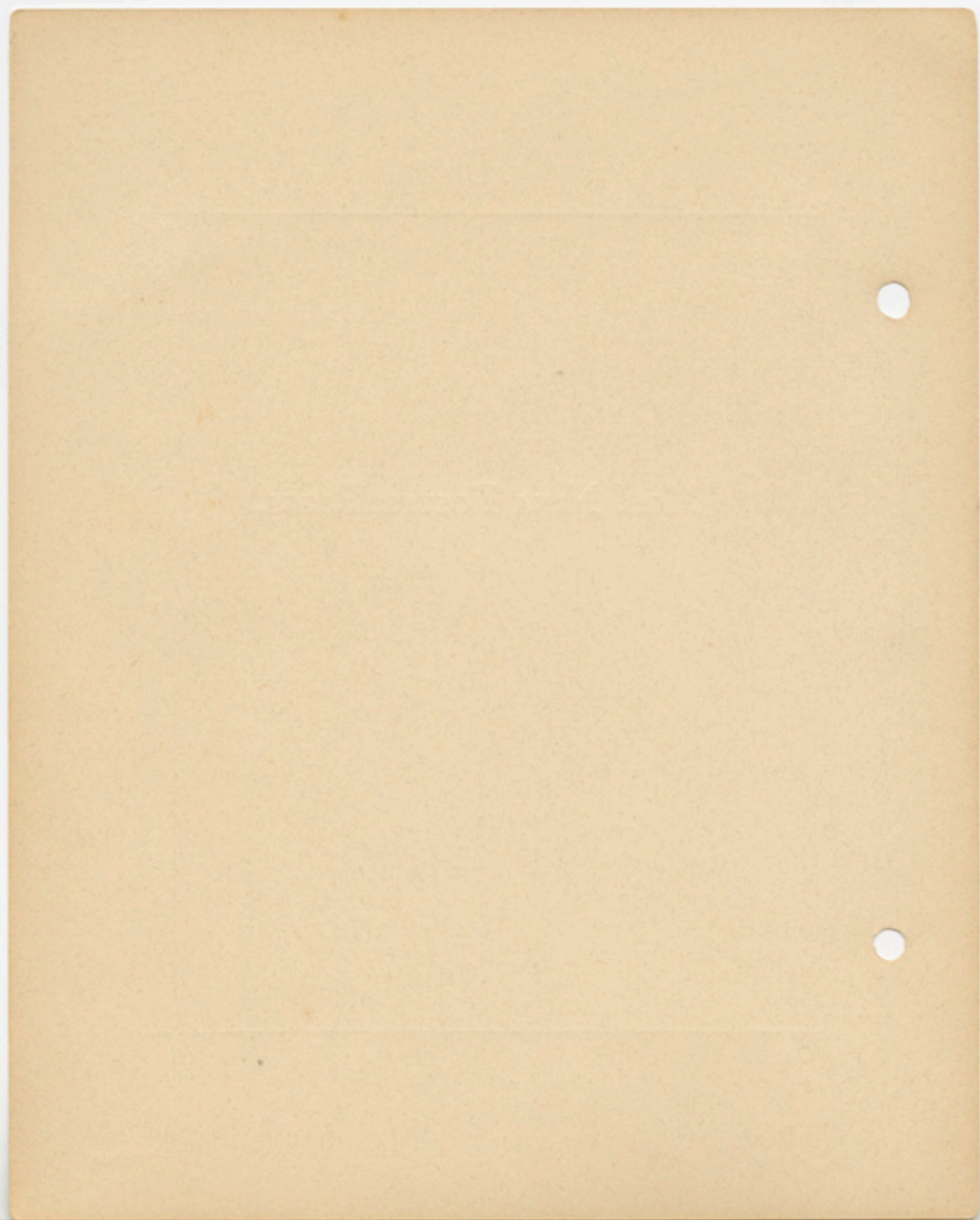
An interesting letter was read from Mrs. Henshaw, of San Francisco. Mrs. Chase, for the committee to whom was referred Mrs. Blatchford's Secretary's Report, gave a *resume* of the more significant facts and suggestions in it. Miss Pollock made singularly good and forcible appeal in behalf of the wider circulation of *Life and Light*. Some one, she said, had remarked, that "if Christ were now to come to this world for the first time, as he did eighteen hundred years ago, he would make great use of the press." "We would add, farther," said Miss Pollock, "he is using the press on every side and in a



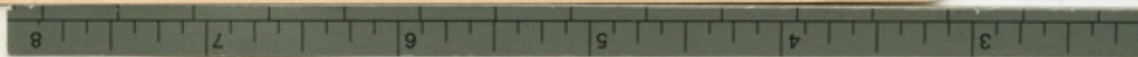
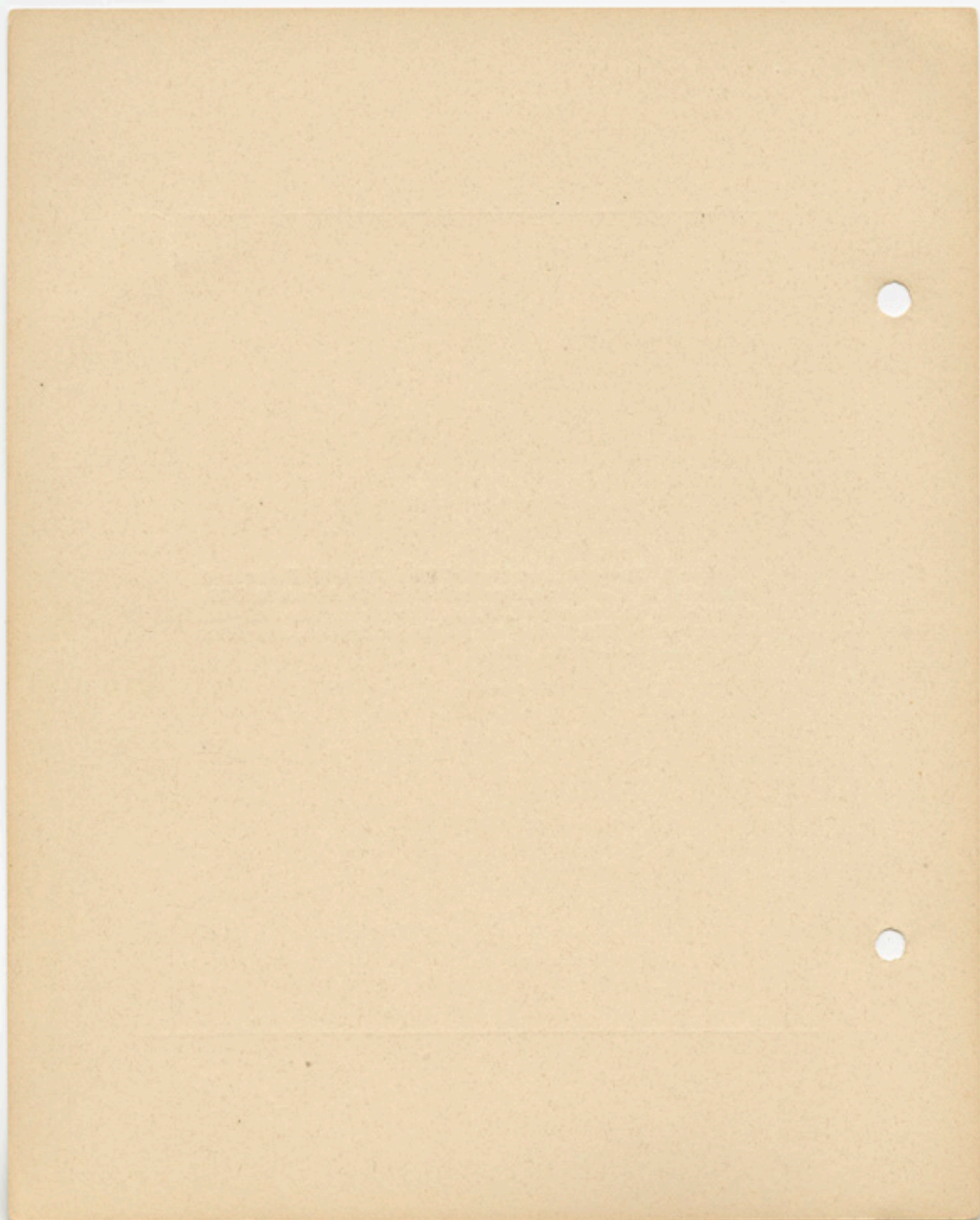
MRS. NINA FOSTER RIGGS.



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Cornelia Margaret, daughter of Hon. John B. Foster and Catharine McGaw Foster, born in Bangor, Me., March 19, 1848: Married to Rev. Thomas L. Riggs, Missionary to the Dakotas, December 26, 1872: Died at the Mission Station, near Fort Sully, Dakota, August 5, 1878.



I.

Rarely is it the lot of one so blessed with loving relations and friends to pass away surrounded by so few to sympathize, and to be buried with so few to weep. Three relatives and nine other white friends stood alone by her grave, and the many hundreds in the far East knew not of the scene. I say *white* friends because I would not ignore the significant presence of those many dusky faces which looked on in sorrow because their friend was dead.

Her family at the time consisted of her husband and little boy, Miss Collins, Robert, a brother of Mr. Riggs, who, with the writer—a cousin of Nina—had come the week before upon a visit, and two hired men, one white and one Indian.

On that last Saturday Mr. Riggs had, with the two friends mentioned, been to Cheyenne Agency. Returning late in the evening, we brought the mail from the Fort, and all sat about the table for a time reading and talking, Nina joining with her usual vivacity, and seeming as well as usual. It was about twelve o'clock when she called to Mr. Riggs, who had not yet gone to his room, and told of feeling severe pain. After a little he called Miss Collins. Together they applied all the customary remedies, but without effect, and about four A. M. a severe convulsion came on. Robert Riggs

started at once to Fort Sully, fifteen miles, for the Post Surgeon; the distance and necessary delay was such that it was after eight o'clock before he returned. Mrs. Crocker, wife of the Chaplain at the Fort, a very kind friend, rode back with Robert. The Post Commandant, Major Lazelle, ordered out his ambulance to follow with the surgeon, who arrived a few moments later.

Meanwhile the convulsions had returned at short intervals, until the eleventh had passed before the doctor's arrival. Upon inquiry, he said that what had been done for the patient was just right, and included about all the preventives which he himself could have employed. His added skill was also defied by the regularly returning convulsions, which continued, despite all our efforts, throughout the entire day and night of Sunday.

On Monday morning her dead babe was born, and the convulsions ceased. We then thought the worst was over, and with tears of joy and relieved hearts spent two happy hours. Nina lay in a heavy unconscious slumber, though meaning involuntarily with every breath. This last symptom made the doctor very anxious, and he watched closely. At length he said she was sinking, not gaining, and those out of the room were called. The message came like a flash of lightning. We gathered about her bedside—there were seven of us—and while the doctor noted her pulse and we almost held our breath, Nina's breathing, now quiet, grew more and more faint, until after about half an hour, at 11 o'clock, it ceased—and we said, "She is happy now."

Nina had not been conscious apparently since the fourth or fifth convulsion, and had said nothing like farewell words. About noon, Tuesday, August 6, the funeral service was conducted by Chaplain Crocker.

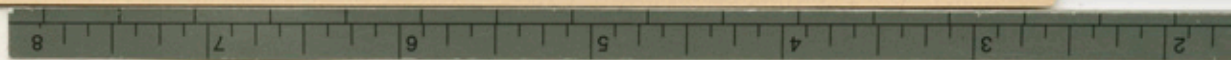
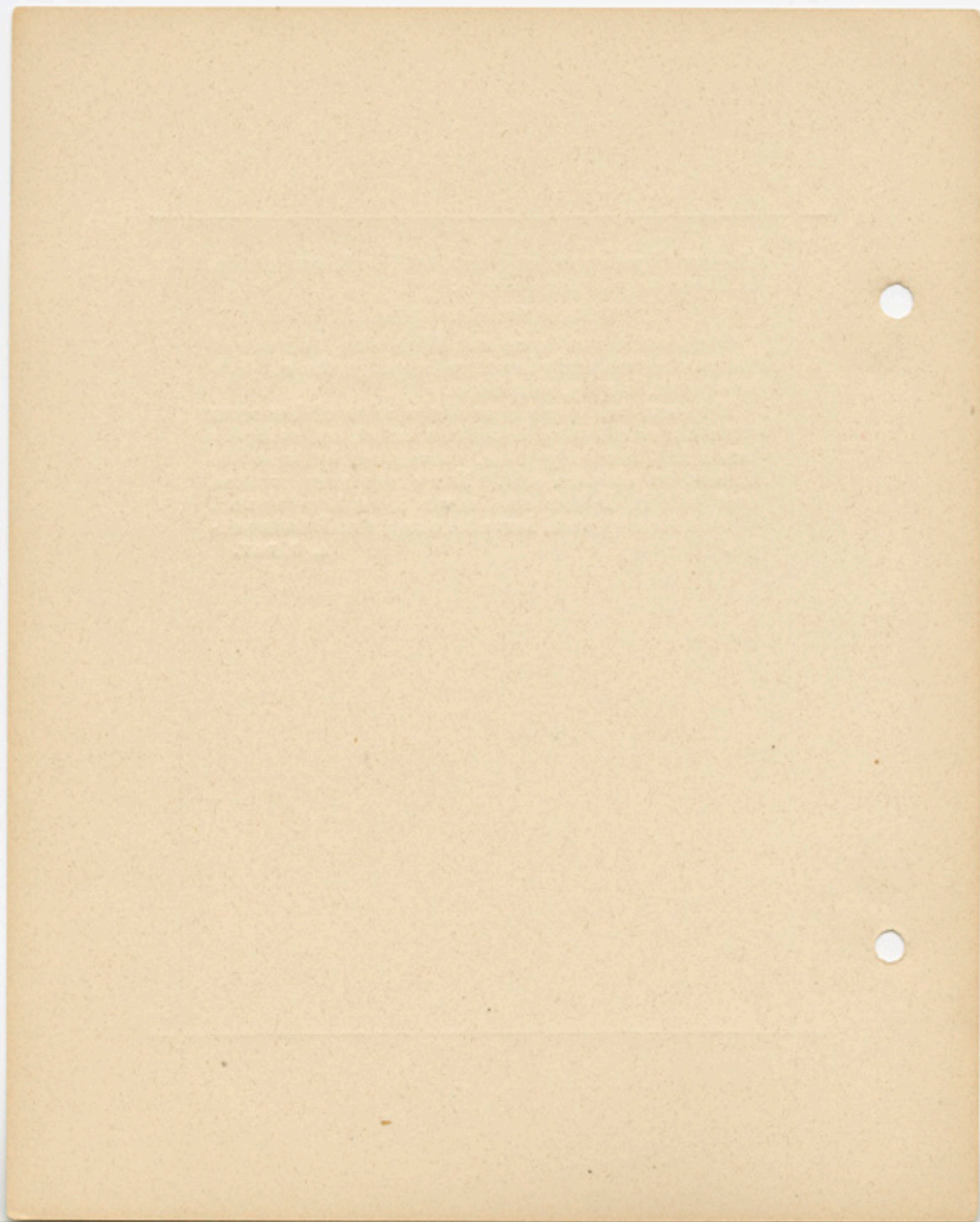
The same hymn was sung that, by Nina's own choice, had been sung at her wedding:

"Guide me, O thou great Jehovah."

One room of the house was filled with Indians, and the service was partly in native language, the chaplain being able, happily, to speak it.

Her grave was made near the window of her room where she so often had beheld the sunset, and as kindly hands laid her body there, surrounded by beautiful flowers, the chaplain said, "Never was more precious dust laid in Dakota soil, never more hopeful seed planted for a spiritual harvest among the Dakota people."

A. H. DAY.



II.

The writer first knew this departed missionary and saint as Nina Foster, a golden-haired, fair-cheeked, gracefully-formed little Sabbath school scholar of ten, at the Central Church in Bangor, of which Drs. George Shepard and Samuel Harris were then joint pastors. Her quick, laughing eye, her sensitive face reflecting every changing thought, her constant companionship of an only sister a little taller, her ready answers to all Sabbath school questions, her constancy at church, her intelligent appreciation of the Professors' sermons, and her sunshiny presence at school and at home were among the impressions which her childhood gave.

I am not quite sure of the date when she confessed the Savior whose love she seemed to have grown into, but I remember she looked very small in stature and young when she stood up with others to assent to the dear old covenant with Christ and his church. [Eleven years of age.]

Our Seminary class left Bangor in 1860; but occasional visits and a subsequent family connection brought Nina's maturer life still more fully under my observation.

She lacked no means of cultivating the rare powers of mind which she developed. Many things she seemed to learn intuitively. Her scholarship was bright,

quick, accurate. Literature was her delight. Her mother's father, Judge McGaw, whose white locks and venerable presence then honored Bangor, was an interested and judicious guide in the home reading.

In social life few shone more brilliantly or were more admired and sought after. In those days, the beauty of person of the young lady was of a rare and noticeable type. Her conversational powers were fascinating. She had by nature genuine histrionic talent, and in conversation, reading, or reciting, seemed to be completely the person she sought to represent. On one occasion by a slight change of dress, voice, and manner, she appeared as an aged widow, pleading with a high officer of the Government at Washington, to help her find a son, lost in the troublous times of 1860-64. He did not recognize in the tearful and aged widow the gay young lady then a guest in his own household! During a visit at Chicago, she became acquainted with Mr. T. L. Riggs, son of the veteran missionary and translator of the Bible into the Dakota language, then a student in the Theological Seminary. Together with his brother, Rev. Alfred L. Riggs, he felt that his father's work was his own. He was preparing to be a missionary to the Dakotas. They were married December 26, 1872.

The engagement and marriage and devotement to missionary life of this beautiful and accomplished girl, eminently fitted to adorn any society, and apparently adapted to lead her companions to a higher, sweeter experience, of him who loves the rich as well as the poor, occasioned much comment in the social circle in which she had been prominent. Christian people and even Christian ministers were inclined to say, "Why

this waste?" Some did say it. Some spoke in bitter and almost angry condemnation of her course. What could she do for the coarse, degraded Indian women, that might not be better done by a less refined, sensitive and elevated nature? Why shut up her beauty and talents in the log cabin of an Indian missionary? It was a shock to some who had preached self-sacrifice, and a painful surprise to many who had been praying the Lord of the harvest for laborers. None of these things moved her. There has seldom been a sweeter and more lovely bride. The wedding greetings were followed immediately by good byes. As Judson and Ann, his wife, sailed across the Atlantic for India over half a century ago, so this young couple turned their backs upon churches, friends and civilization itself, and went to the far western wilderness, and made themselves a home among a people almost entirely heathen. In due time they erected their log cabin on the treeless prairie, in plain sight of the rushing Missouri, and proceeded with their appointed work.

The Dakotas gathered around them; the women were taught sewing and other housewifely accomplishments; a school was established, preaching services held, and the tenderly reared young wife of the missionary proved herself in all his hardships, a helpmeet indeed. A little boy, Theodore, now four years of age, was given them. During the summer of 1877 a simple mission chapel of boards was erected by the help of Sabbath school contributions and others. The secluded household was not without chastisement. Two of its inmates were called up higher.

At the meeting of the American Board at Minneapolis in October, 1873, Mrs. Riggs was present. The ladies

who made up the large audience that filled the church at a session of the Woman's Board when Mrs. Riggs pleaded so eloquently for a young lady helper, will easily recall her vivid portraiture of the needs of the poor Indian women, and the wonderful enthusiasm that was awakened when two or three volunteered to go, and it only remained to secure the necessary funds to meet the additional expense. These were cheerfully pledged.

Mrs. Riggs again addressed the ladies when the Board met in Chicago in 1875. And when she referred to the consecrated life and efficient services of Miss Bishop, who had volunteered and been accepted two years before, as her helper in the mission, and who had come home to die, all hearts were moved, and tears flowed freely. Mrs. Riggs again made a most earnest and touching appeal for the Indian women, depicting their hopeless sorrows and sufferings without the gospel. At the close of her remarks it was announced that Miss Bishop was dead, the news having come by letter to the President of the meeting. Two young ladies, Miss Emmie Whipple and Miss Mary Collins, offered to go as assistants in the place thus made vacant. The three were, before many weeks, happily employed in the work, and everything pertaining to the mission seemed the most hopeful and promising.

In the summer of 1877 the young ladies were again in Chicago on a brief vacation, and Miss Whipple addressed ladies in other places, to impart to them some of her own enthusiasm for the cause. But she was taken suddenly ill in Chicago early in August, and died within two weeks. This was a terrible shock and grief to those at the Fort Sully Mission. Miss Collins was with her friend until death, and then went to do what

she could to comfort and help Mrs. Riggs. Now just before the completion of one short year Mrs. Riggs herself is called to her heavenly home.

There is no record of the Minneapolis address. The ADVANCE of October 21, 1875, contained a brief report of the remarks at Chicago, above alluded to.

Naturally diffident, and entirely unaccustomed to public utterance, only those women, who have attempted it, know how difficult it was for Mrs. Riggs to speak even to her own sex and when all hearts beat in sympathy with her words. She said:

Two years ago, at a meeting in Minneapolis, I made a request which was promptly answered. I asked for a young lady to go back with me to the mission work. I find her name is not on the rolls. But if ever a brave life should be recorded, and the name of an earnest woman be beloved and remembered by all, it is that of Miss Lizzie Bishop, of Northfield, Minnesota. We had hoped she might return, but the Lord has not seen fit to allow that. He calls her to himself soon, I suppose. For her and for that work which she loved I ask your prayers.

I wish I could show you the rough log buildings. I wish I could show you the Indians in their native dress peering into the mission house. I wish I could show you them just as they are in their homes,—how they suffer when they are sick in their miserable dwellings. Those of you who are mothers with little children's clinging arms about your necks and sweet kisses on your lips, can understand better than any other what it is to lose a little child. I wish I could tell you of the deep, lasting grief which calls forth not only our prayers, but something more, which calls for our gifts that some one may be sent to tell them of that life which is beyond, where they shall see their little ones again.

For the past two years I have been at different stations. I was at Hope Station, on the west side of the Missouri River, opposite Fort Sully. Now I am at Bogue Station, fifteen miles below Fort Sully, on the east side. Since I have been there I have met a great many women. At first they all seemed to me very degraded, but I have

come not only to feel interested in many of them, but to love some of them with a very deep love. Oh, give us your prayers, your tender thought from one day to another, not waiting for these annual meetings, expecting us to come and tell you of the coming of the Lord. Carry us daily in your hearts and prayers. We need it.

A private letter of July 20, lies before me. It is one of the last she wrote. I will quote enough to show the kind of life one must lead at such a place, and a few words as to the opening work that cheered the missionaries' hearts.

Writing of those terribly hot days in July, she says: "The mercury stood at 97° in our sitting room one day, and the next two days were worse still. It was 101 in the house, and chocolate melted on the top shelf of our pantry?" She then expressed satisfaction at the cooler weather and the arrival of good help for the kitchen. She expresses a wish to go to Milwaukee to the meeting of the Board, but does not expect to go. She adds:

We feel a good deal of encouragement about some portions of our missionary work now. Many have taken farms, plowed their fields and are trying to raise crops. They are also interested in stock raising. We ourselves have quite a herd of cattle, and an Indian takes care of them. He lives with us, helps in the fields, and is to be paid from the herd. There is a good deal of ambition among the men to be successful in their work, and with their stock; and so they are becoming more manly. Lately, too, they have begun to look upon the marriage ceremony as right and binding. Several marriages have lately been solemnized by Mr. Riggs. Last communion a baby boy was presented for baptism. There are two waiting for the next communion to be admitted to church membership. *All these things gladden our hearts and seem like the glow before the day dawn. Pra, for us.*

When — died, did he express any hope for the life beyond?

In May, 1871, more than a year previous to her marriage, when the new missionary life was dawning

upon her, the same pen was reflecting thoughts and aspirations that now seem like prophecies. The text and title of a little poem, published at that time, was the question, "Art Thou Ready?"*

Hark! the Lord's dear voice is calling,
Oa my heart its accents falling,
Soft and clear, and sweet and low—
"Art thou ready? Rise and go!"

Lord, I am here! Dost thou decree
Danger, or bonds, or death for me,
I will grieve not, nor repine;
All I have and am is thine!

I shall not faint. What need to fear
Steep mountain pass, or desert drear?
Jesus' love, like richest wine,
Shall sustain this soul o. mine.

Jesus, my Brother, Priest and King,
My heart for joy doth leap and sing
That me, unworthy, thou hast found
Worthy even to be bound.

Sweet friends, put by your heavy fears,
Unloose your hands, restrain your tears!
Clear, I see, with lifted eyes,
Cross, *then* Crown and Paradise.

Not quite "in the Rocky Mountains," but far away toward their summits this dear, sweet life ceased on earth, to be glorified in the Jerusalem above.

Reflections that there is no space to record here rush upon me. God seems to have made some things clearer by this life and early death, even as he did by Harriet Newell's, and so many other dear young lives yielded up to him on mission fields. One is, that the noblest of mankind reach their highest use, when consecrated to the salvation of the lowest and meanest of those who bear the Divine image. In nothing could this life

have been more effective than in the striking and impressive example which it constantly gave, to the "peering" eyes of the degraded beings around her, of true and holy marriage, and the joys of a Christian home.

Another thought is the widespread influence that one such life exerts on missions and the missionary spirit. A third is the old wonder that God lets such desolation come into these bereaved families in Dakota, Illinois and Maine; such a loss to the Indians, the Mission, and to the earthly kingdom of Christ. It is only by looking at the greater kingdom, and identifying the two worlds in all their interests, their sorrows and their joys,—it is only by seeing the glory of grace here, and the fruit of the suffering over there, on Christ's throne, and around it, that we are comforted.

"Then sorrow, touched by Thee, grows bright,
With more than rapture's ray;
As darkness shows us worlds of light,
We never saw by day."

I cannot better close this utterly inadequate tribute to so noble and rich a life than by quoting the following words written in a private letter by her own father: "She was ready to go, I have no doubt of this. When I look back through her life I fail to remember one single thing that awakens an unpleasant thought of her. She would not have admitted that she was perfect, but I cannot see wherein she was not. Dear girl, she is at rest; and a blessed rest it is."—*Rev. R. B. Howard in the Advance of August 22, 1878.*

East Orange, N. J.

*—Was it the wife that answered, or was it a voice from the old time? What mean ye to weep and break mine heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but a so to die at Jerusalem, or in the Rocky Mountains, for the name of the Lord Jesus."—*An Hour with an Old Missionary.*

III.

The death of Mrs. Nina Foster Riggs, wife of Rev. T. L. Riggs, missionaries of the American Board to the Dakota Indians, has caused a thrill of grief to many hearts. That great congregation of ladies at the meeting of the American Board in Minneapolis will never forget that utterly modest and unaffected, that wonderfully touching and effective speech of Mrs. Riggs, pleading on behalf of the hapless women of the savage tribes, for helpers to come out with her to the new far-away home and promiseful missionary field. Only five years have passed, and she is gone. Two of the ladies who, then or subsequently, caught her spirit and offered their lives to the same work, have also laid down their lives, or rather, we would say, taken them up where the good Lord had more eminent use for them. But it is earnestly asked, Does it pay? Was it right to sacrifice such persons in the experiment of trying to christianize such heathen, and savages at that? The friends of missions have often been sharply blamed. They are charged with "throwing away" and "wasting" in seemingly hopeless mission fields lives which might have shone at home in social circles of extraordinary cultivation and delightfulness, helping those who could appreciate their excellencies. But are such complaints well taken? Is it a waste? God builds better than we

know ; and lives of this kind may serve more uses and more important ones, than we can discern. And then, it is not true that the Divine plan is all a mystery. Look at some of the facts in a case of this kind.

Here was a young woman of extraordinary beauty of person, of still more noticeable symmetry and completeness of mental endowment, sweetness and nobility of disposition, brightness and elasticity of temperament; quickly, keenly sympathetic with others' joys and sorrows—but who had never known a grief of her own; converted in infancy, reared in one of the happiest of earnest Christian homes, and favored with as fine social and educational advantages as the country affords; with too much sense to be much affected by mere "romance," yet deeply alive to all the poetry alike in literature and in real life; and withal, from early childhood, with a spiritual imagination exquisitely alive to the realness and the nearness of unseen things, and the all-controlling sweep of the motives springing therefrom;—rarely does one meet a young person better fitted at once to enjoy and to adorn what is best in American Christian homes. At the age of twenty-four she marries a young man just out of the Seminary, and goes forth with him beyond the frontiers of civilization, into the very heart of savage Indian tribes. What a sacrifice; what a venture; what certain-coming solitudes, perils, cares, deprivations, hardships, loneliness, and mountainous discouragements. And there, for the short period of less than five years she lives, when suddenly the young missionary is left alone, longing for the "touch of a vanished hand and the sound of a voice that is still."

Now a case like this must set one to studying over again what, after all, is the true philosophy of life, and

what, on the whole, is the wisest economy of personal forces in the church's work of christianizing the world. As helping to a right answer, let us note a few facts:

1. It costs to save a lost world; and nothing is wasted that serves well that end. God himself has given for this purpose the choicest, the highest and the best, which it was possible for even Him to give.

2. Heathen people, even savages, as we call them, are not insensible to the unique fascination, and power to subdue and inspire, which belong to what is really most beautiful in aspect, manner, mind and character. Often it is to them as if they had seen a vision, or dreamed a startling dream of possibilities of which they had known nothing, and could have known nothing, until they *saw* it, and the sight awakened into being and action the diviner elements of their own hidden nature. The word of God is one form of revelation, but the work of God in a peculiarly complete and lovely character is another revelation, and one that unmistakably interprets itself. There is as much need of the one as there is of the other. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ, must, in most cases, at least, first be seen reflected "in the face" of some of his disciples. The more dense the darkness, the more intense must be the shining of the love and the beauty of the truth which are to enlighten, captivate, lead forth, and refine. Among all the tepees and huts of that Indian Reservation, as also throughout the barracks and quarters of the military post at Fort Sully, Mrs. Riggs was known, and the potent charm of her personal influence and home-life was deeply felt. It is largely due to such persons, that the cause of missions even among the

most degraded, commands the respect if not the veneration of those who otherwise might have looked on derisively.

3. Nor again are the lives of such persons wasted as regards their influence upon those who knew them, or shall come to know of them, at home. "How far that little candle throws its beams; so shines a good example;" and in instances like these, it shines more effectively than, perhaps, in any other circumstances would have been possible. If one were to mention a score of American women who have exerted most influence in determining the best characteristics of American women, half of them, we suspect, would be names of the women who, leaving home and country, went far forth seeking to multiply similar homes in other countries.

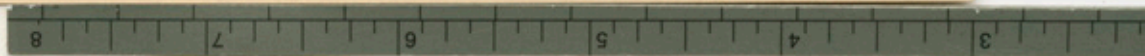
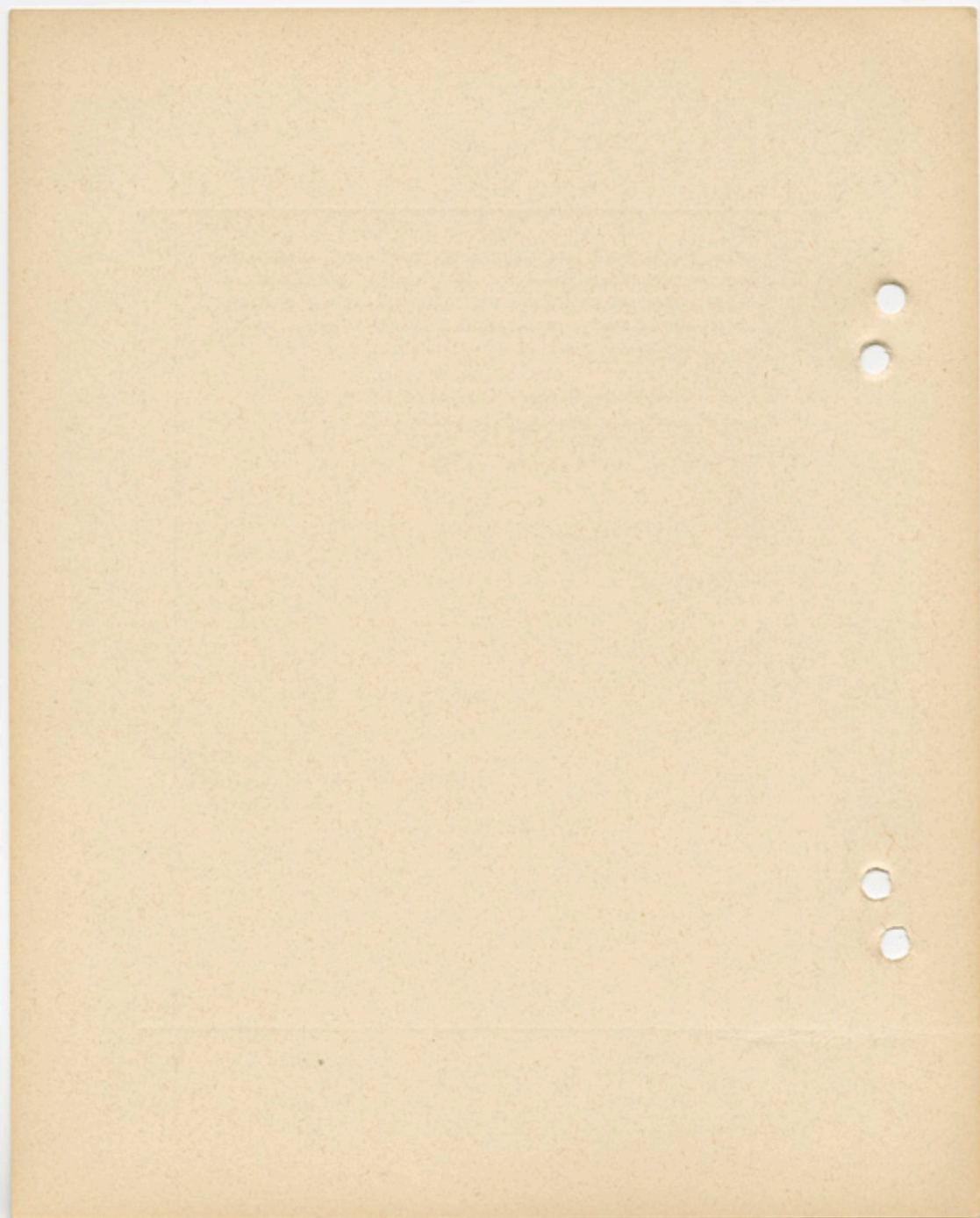
4. Nor again, is the strangely beautiful life wasted because cut short so early in its course. The ointment most precious, was never more so than when its box was broken and the odor of it filled all the house. This that this young missionary has done, animated by the love of the Master and a sacred passion for lifting up the lowly, will be spoken of as a memorial of her in all the churches; and in not a few homes, of the rich as of the poor, will be felt the sweet constraint of her beautiful, joyous, consecrated life. She was not alone; there are many more like her; and best of all, there are to be vastly more yet, who will not be deaf to "the high calling." The Master has need of them. The way, on the whole, is infinitely attractive. Thanks for the life of this woman who did so much, from first to last, to make it appear so!

And thanks, too, for such a death which, coming in the sweetest and completest blooming of life's beauty,

when not a fault had stayed to mar it, and no wasting
had ever touched it—an ending which transfigures all
that came before it, and which, now in the mingling of
retrospect and prospect, helps those who knew her,
to a deeply surprised sense of the fact, that

To Death it is given,
To see how this world is embosomed in heaven.

—*Editorial in the Advance of August 22, 1878.*



IV.

A year ago this month, our eyes beheld the sun-burned prairie of Northern Dakota. Its treeless waste lay under a scorching summer sun. Beneath a bluff which overlooks the river lowlands nestled a solitary green enclosure around a long, low dwelling, whose aspect was of comfort and of home. The sunshine which withered the surrounding country was not the gentle power under which had sprung up this oasis in the desert. The light within the house, whose sweet radiance beautified the humble dwelling, and shone forth upon the wilderness around, was the fair soul whose heaven-reflected glory touched all that came within its ray. The happy wife and mother, the faithful friend, the counselor and example of the dusky Indian women, the physician of their sick—she it was whose passing to the "upper kingdom" has withdrawn all the brightness from that scene. Her feet have newly pressed the shining shore, whither our streaming eyes follow her, longing for one more look of recognition from the face which beams with heavenly glory; but her gaze is fixed upon her Lord, in whose presence is life evermore, and we turn to look upon the beautiful life so early finished, to study the secret of it, and thank God for its fair and holy lessons.

Few of the friends who knew her after her coming

West, will remember the little girl in the Eastern home whose *spirituelle* face, with its halo of golden hair, seemed so much more of heaven than of earth as to cause the frequent, anxious comment, that this world could not long detain her. An active, happy child among her playmates, her thoughts were often upon heavenly things, and her desire to turn theirs thitherward, yet without anything morbid or unchildlike in her ways. When about ten years old, with one or two companions she sought out some poor neglected children, and taught them little lessons in books and sewing and of God, all with such naturalness and simplicity as children manifest in their favorite occupations. As she grew to womanhood, she was the delight of the home which so tenderly shielded her from every rude blast, and of a large circle of attached friends.

She possessed those charms of person and manners and qualities of mind which won admiration, and peculiarly fitted her to enjoy and adorn general society. So when the time came for her to change this for a secluded life, many regretted that the "fine gold" should be sent where baser metal, as they thought, would do as well; that the noble woman, so eminently fitted for usefulness in circles of refinement, should spend her life among the degraded and unappreciative savages. But the event has proved that only such a nature, abounding in resources, could be the animating spirit of a model home in the wilderness which has been an object lesson of Christian culture, not only to the Indian but to the army people, who were her only white neighbors, and who, for her sake, could look with interest on a work too often an object of contempt. And then the reflex influence upon those who missed her from their

number, or met her as she journeyed to her field of labor, has been in proportion to the grace of her refinement and the breadth and depth of her character. God, who spared not his own Son, still gives his choicest ones to the salvation of man.

In Chicago, at the home of her sister, in 1869, she first knew Mr. Riggs, and their mutual love soon compelled her to consider what it would be to share his life-work. She recognized its hardships and deprivations, as could hardly have been expected in one so inexperienced in life's trials. She afterwards often playfully said she was "not a missionary—only a missionary's wife." It was, indeed, a two-fold consecration, joyous and entire, to the life of wife and missionary. The parent who gives his infant child to the Lord in the holy rite of baptism, little realizes what that may mean to him in later years. So her parents, when called to give her up at the time of her marriage, December 26, 1872, to go into the wilds of Dakota, wrestled in spirit as they renewed their consecration. The father writes: "I gave her up when she left us on that winter's night. It was a hard struggle, but I think I gave her unconditionally to God, to whom she so cheerfully gave herself."

At that time of the year it was impossible for her to take the perilous journey to Dakota with her husband; so after a brief visit at her sister's home, near Chicago, he left her there until the following April, when, with her husband's father, she took the first boat up the Missouri, and rejoined him at Hope Station, opposite Fort Sully, D. T., where the little log house he had built became their first home. She had already made some progress in the Dakota language, but not sufficient to work, except to teach home-making by her example.

Of the first half-year here, not without its dangers from the then excited Indians, its novel situations and strange experiences, she told us on her return with her husband, that fall, to attend the meeting of the Board in Minneapolis. Her buoyant spirits and faculty for seeing the droll side of everything, helped her to make the sketch a bright one. Her sense of humor and keen wit has lightened many a load for herself and others ; the more forlorn and hopeless the situation, the more elastic her spirits. How often have those of her own household, wearied with severe labor and weighed down with care, been compelled to laugh, almost against their will, by her irresistible drollery, and thus the current of thought turned and the burden half thrown aside!

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This last year of the mission has seen the completion of the longed-for chapel, the first gathering at that place of the churches of the Dakota mission for their annual meeting, and after that an increasing interest among the people, which led many to lay aside the garb of savage life, and to join the church and school, in civilized dress ; and, what far more rejoiced the missionaries' hearts, some have indeed put on the robe of Christ's righteousness, and begun to live for Him. In one of the latest letters, Mrs. Riggs says, in speaking of their progress : "It seems like the beginning of the dawn."

During the past summer all had gone on peacefully in the home. Friends from a distance cheered it with their visits, and save the fearful heat of July, nothing occurred to mar the serenity of the household, until on the night of August 3d Mrs. Riggs was taken with vio-

lent convulsions, and the care of friends and physician were of no avail. On the morning of the 5th her dead babe was born, and she lay unconscious, too weak to rally, till the time of her death. Near the spot hallowed by her death her grave is made—a silent witness to those for whom she labored, that she loved them even unto death. The Lord, who accepted the lavish gift of the precious ointment, will tenderly accept this rich life whose fragrance abides in many hearts and homes.

A dear friend writes: "In her the light of Christ shone clearly, undimmed by the earthliness and selfishness which obstruct it in others—a pure ideal of what a Christian woman should be."—*Mrs. Katie F. Howard, in Life and Light.*

V.

"To all who come, I want my house to seem a pleasant home," she often said; and such it was. I think no one ever entered her home without feeling that the very house was purified by her presence. I remember well just how she studied our different tastes. She knew every member of her family thoroughly. Our happiness was consulted in all things. She loved the mission work, and literally "went from house to house doing good." She would kneel beside a sick woman and try to relieve her pain, or still the cries of an ailing infant, or bind up the wounds of some stalwart man, all with grace and with a sympathetic heart. The mission work was very dear to her; but next to Jesus she loved her husband and child. No sacrifice was too great to make for them.

At one time Mr. Riggs seemed to be in failing health. He was overworked, and Mrs. Riggs was greatly alarmed concerning him. One day she said to me, "I want my husband to rest; will you stay with me next summer, and let him go East?" "Yes," I said, "I will stay with you, but not without you." "Yes, you would stay with some one else if it were necessary for us to go," she said. "No," said I, "Emmie is gone, and if you go too, I will conclude the Lord does not want me any longer." That made a deep impression

on her mind, and she frequently referred to it afterward, and said if she should go away or die, I must not leave the work. "They would need you more than ever," she said. Oh, how those words sound in my ear to-day! "They would need you more than ever."

Where she was, was continual sunshine. No matter how many people came in at one time, as they sometimes did come, her table was always prettily and bountifully spread. Whatever her cares were at the time, her company would never think she had put forth extra effort to entertain them. Nothing ever caused her to neglect her household, and her work was always cheerfully done, and not considered irksome; it was all love's work. Her little boy, active and strong, with a powerful will, was often a source of perplexity to her; and oh, how earnestly she strove to bring him up in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord!" She would reason with him and pray with him, and would talk to the Lord and say, "Dear Father, little Theodore is naughty. He has a naughty temper. He is sorry and wants to be good. Give him a new heart; help him to be a happy Christian boy." Theodore early learned where to go in trouble, and one day, after he had been unusually naughty, he fell upon his knees and said, "Dear Father, forgive me, oh, forgive me! Mamma, He don't hear me; you tell him." And then with what sweet, comforting words she talked with him, explaining to him the necessity of praying for himself!

She spoke evil of no one, and when others did, she would find some excuse for the person, and often said, "We owe a great deal to our Christian bringing-up." The last summer of her precious life seemed a very fitting one for the last. She labored earnestly for the conversion

of her boy, and said, "If I should die and leave my boy, I would feel so much better satisfied to go if he had that stronghold." She was never despondent—always looked at the bright side. Even in those dark days following Miss Whipple's death, she looked beyond the gloom. She said, "We will do this or that, because Emmarette would like to have us do it. We must not grieve for her, for she is happy, and would want us to be so too. She is never tired now, and sick no more, and whatever Heaven is, *she is satisfied*." So it is with her dear self; whatever her employment is, she is satisfied.

Her illness was short, but oh, so severe. She was wholly unconscious of her suffering from the first, so left no parting words. It was unnecessary. Her whole life is a sweet recollection. Her every day was a fitting one for the last day. We robed her in her bridal dress, and as we laid her beautiful form in the plain casket, with aching hearts, we thought of the host of dear absent ones who would gladly mingle their tears with ours, but who were far, far away. But we know that the angels of the Lord were round about, and that the King of kings and Lord of lords himself was present. We laid them to rest, the sweet mother and babe, where from her own room window we could look upon the graves as we beheld the glorious sunsets she so loved to watch, and as we sit there and see the beautiful clouds, so bright and golden, we say as she said, "If heaven is so beautiful on this side, what must it be on the other?"—*Mary C. Collins in Iapi Oaye.*

VI.

In the weeks that have gone since we heard the sorrowful tidings from Fort Sully, our thoughts have been full of the beautiful sister, gone so unexpectedly from us. In the early morning, in the noon-tide, as evening comes on, and in the night watch, our thoughts turn to Nina, our darling Nina. We think, too, of the lonely household—of the little Theodore, whose sweet “mamma Nina” has left him, and of his father, so sorely bereaved—yet God can comfort him.

Over and over, my memory gathers up what it can of Nina—so sorrowfully little it seems, now that we shall never see her again until we meet in the glorious home above. And the letters from her, those cheery, charming letters, have been so pitifully few. How few I hardly realized until now I know that I shall never have another one. But the work day by day pressed on her, as on us all, and so it was often months that we had but little word from the Teeton country.

When my blue-eyed boy had been laid away out of sight—of all the words of comfort and sympathy our friends sent to us, none were more sympathetic or more comforting than Nina's. Let me transcribe them here: “I have wept with you for the dear little baby form laid away from your arms to its last sleep, and I find it hard to see why our Father could not have left with us

the sunny-haired, bright little treasure. And yet, a baby with the Lord! There is something wonderfully sweet in the thought, and though he had been your only one, you still would not be childless. I think of your words, 'Nothing to do any more.' Ah! my dear sister, He will not so leave you comfortless. He who forgot not in the last hours of his earthly life to give to the aching mother-heart a new care and love, will not forget, I think, to bestow on your emptied hands some new duty which shall grow to be a joy."

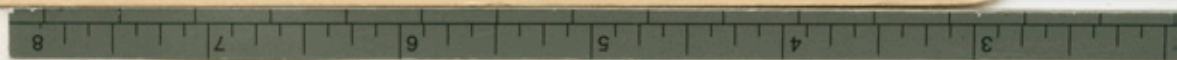
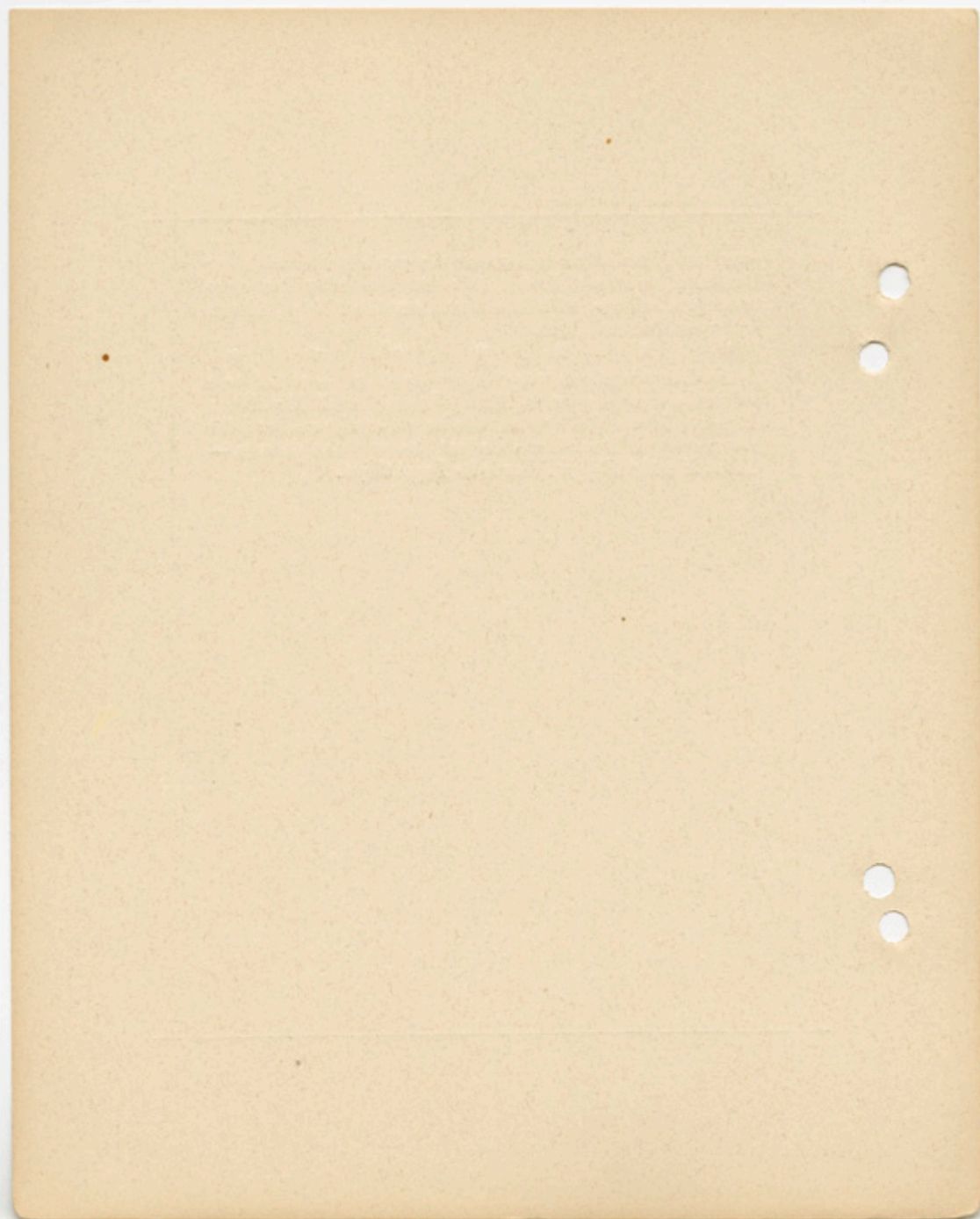
In the Autumn of 1876, the Annual Mission Conference was held with our Sisseton churches, and we were glad indeed to welcome the travelers from Fort Sully. These were Thomas and Nina, and their little lad Theodore, two years old, who amused us all by his quaint sayings, and who clung closely to his "mamma Nina." There, too, were Miss Collins and Miss Whipple.

At the special meeting held for the women at this time Nina made a few remarks, winning all hearts by her grace of manner, as well as by her lovely face. And now that she is gone they mention her as the "beautiful woman who spoke so well." But not the least of the enjoyment of this "feast of days" were the bits of talk sandwiched in here and there, between meetings, and caring for the children and providing for the guests. As we baked the bread and watched over the two cousins Theodore and Mary Theodora, so nearly of an age, we had many a pleasant chat, Nina and I. She gave me an insight into their happy home life, and I longed to know more. She told, too, of her special work in visiting the homes of the Teeton women, and prescribing for the sick. Now and then an incident like this crept out in the talk: One winter there was no

one but Nina who could make the weekly visit with her husband to the different schools. So baby Theodore was bundled up and taken along, on the ride of fifteen miles and home again.

* * * * *

And that was our last glimpse here on earth of two of those brave women, Miss Whipple and Mrs. Nina Riggs. If we had known it to be so, could we have let them go? It is well we do not know these things.—
Mrs. Martha Riggs Morris in Iapi Oaye.



VII.

While writing this discourse, my thoughts have constantly reverted to her who has been taken from life during the last week, and whose sudden death has awakened so profound a sympathy throughout our community.

So young and accomplished—so sweet, and yet so strong—so gentle and refined, and yet so brave and resolute—an object of mingled love and reverence to the rude Indians among whom she lived—yet cut down so early and so suddenly, with her life-work just opening before her resolute and eager spirit. We could pity her, if she was not lifted too far above us to be an object of our pity. As it is, we honor her and pay her the sincere tribute of our admiration. Well has she learned the lessons of a self-sacrificing love, and well did she know the happiness that comes from doing and daring and suffering for others.

I am not about to speak of her; if there were time I could not do it fitly. Only this will I say: I pity those who think to pity her, and I wonder at those who, believing in the life of Christ, account her life a failure. Few lives have seemed to me so happy as hers—so noble, so *successful*. I had rather be she, with her brief career so crowded with adventure, with hardships, with self-sacrificing beneficence, than any of your daughters

of luxury, lolling on their couches of ease, and expending all their efforts to secure a little admiration to themselves.

How poor and commonplace most of our lives seem by the side of that life, so beautiful and so heroic !

Well has she done her work, and well is she fitted for the best happiness of Heaven—the happiness that comes from the activities of a self-sacrificing love.—
Rev. G. W. Field, at the close of a Sermon on the Employments of Heaven, preached at Central Church, Bangor, August 11, 1878.

