

In Memoriam [Bourdeau]

By Uriah Smith

The Readers of This Little Work

who have an interest in the publication and largely free distribution of literature for French Catholics in Canada and elsewhere, which will be a necessity, and to which the deceased was alive, can manifest it by sending their contributions to "Review and Herald," Battle Creek, Mich., or to D. T. Bourdeau, 836 St. Lawrence Street, Montreal, P. Q. For further information, read articles on this subject which appeared in No. 19 of volume 76 of "Review and Herald"; also a French Appeal in Behalf of the French Tract Fund.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

AT THE funeral services of Mrs. Sarah A. Bourdeau-Giguere held in the Tabernacle at Battle Creek, Mich., February 11, 1899, Elder Uriah Smith, officiating minister, made introductory remarks to the effect that the deceased had left the clearest evidence that she had fallen asleep in Jesus, and then read the following historical sketch, which he said had been handed to him for the occasion:-

She to whom we would, with our sympathizing friends, pay a tribute of respect on this occasion, was of French and English extraction. Her father, John Menard, was a French Canadian of respectability, belonging to a numerous and enterprising family that settled not far from St. Johns, Canada East, or Lower Canada, and in different parts of the States. Her grandfather on her mother's side had an English ancestry, and fought in the Revolutionary War.

The deceased being a lover of liberty, would occasionally refer to the fact that one of her ancestors helped in bringing about civil and religious liberty in a country that she loved, and to

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another fact; namely, that in her early youth she had met General Lafayette, who had aided George Washington in promoting the cause of freedom.

The deceased was born a Roman Catholic, in the township of St. Athanase, Lower Canada; but when quite young, she with her parents, following the tide of emigration to the States, moved to northern Vermont, and gradually came under Protestant influence. At the age of fourteen she visited Canada, went to a Catholic priest, and confessed to him, receiving his pious counsels. He said to her, among other things, "You may be where you can not confess to a priest. In that case confess to God who will hear and forgive you. Remember that we are drawing near the end. I believe that some of you [the children and youth to whom he was speaking] will live to see the return of our Lord Jesus Christ." ["This

shows us," added the speaker, "how the belief of the near coming of Christ was then obtaining, even among Catholics."]

At the age of twenty, she, who now sweetly sleeps before us, was married to Augustin Bourdeau, a native of St. Regis, Lower Canada, whose father was Canadian French, and mother France French. He was born July 12, 1809, was a Roman Catholic by birth, and early directed his steps to the then noted land of freedom. The newly married couple soon settled as pioneers in the wilds of Enosburgh, Franklin county, Vermont, and opened up a farm. Later on a village was formed on and near the farm of Augustin Bourdeau, and through respect for this pioneer, as one of the first settlers, and as one beloved of all who knew him, it was named Bordoville.

Soon after the settlement of Mr. and Mrs. Augustin Bourdeau at this point, they were converted, and fully espoused the cause of Protestantism, with the determination that, by grace divine,

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nothing would keep them from advancing in the light of the Bible, and from fully merging out of the labyrinth of error and superstition, in which they had for some time felt the need of light, truth, and liberty. They soon united with the Baptists, believing them to be in advance of other Christians near them on the point of Christian baptism, and were among the eleven who started the first French Baptist church of Vermont. They were in a French Catholic settlement, and did all in their power to bring the clearer light of the gospel, to them so precious, to Catholics near them, and in adjoining townships, until more than one hundred French Catholics had been led to see and embrace Jesus as the only one who can save men from their sins.

The main burden of evangelizing rested on the deceased, as she was acquainted with both the French and English languages, and could read the Bible in those tongues. She was a thorough Bible student, and would retire at night with the Bible under her pillow, as her best companion and greatest earthly treasure, having, under all circumstances, read it regularly and systematically in the day time, and before taking her rest at night. Having a remarkable memory, and a studious turn of mind, which she cultivated by daily exercise, she became very familiar with the Bible, and was regarded as a living concordance to the Holy Scriptures. In teaching Catholics she would use a ten-commandment chart, and would show them how it was sinful to bow before images.

She thought she was keeping all the commandments, and one night before retiring, with the deepest solicitude and with weeping, she presented to the Lord the following petition: "If I deviate from the right path in any particular, make it known to me, if need be, during the night

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watches." That very night she dreamed she was before a beautiful table upon which was a large Bible with bold characters, opened to the ten commandments. On the table, and around the Bible, were beautiful white articles of wearing apparel. By the Bible stood a tall, lovely personage dressed in white. He passed his right hand over the decalogue, until it had reached about the middle of that sacred document, the portion occupied by the fourth commandment. He then

said to Mrs. Bourdeau, "Do you know that you are not keeping all the commandments?" She replied, "No, Lord," and weeping she added, "Which commandment, Lord, do I not observe?" Removing his hand from the Sabbath precept, he said, "You will know hereafter." ["Here is a remarkable instance showing how God prepares the way of the honest to receive further light." The speaker.]

About that time her sister older than herself had a similar dream; and twelve years later both she and Mrs. Bourdeau, on seeing and embracing the truth of the Sabbath, exclaimed, "Our dream is fulfilled." At that time, - about forty-three years ago, the husband, two sons, and a daughter of the deceased, with several others, commenced the observance of the true Sabbath, and accepted kindred truths, and a large church of Seventh-day Adventists was formed at and near Bordoville.

There were born to Father and Mother Bourdeau three children who arrived at maturity, the first two of whom are now known as Elders A. C. and D. T. Bourdeau, who are present on this occasion. Their third child, a daughter, died a believer in present truth and in bright hope of immortality, thirty-two years ago, being a mother of four children who are still alive, but not

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present to-day. For these and for their father the dying child of God left these words: "Meet me and my daughter now sleeping in Jesus at the coming of the Lifegiver. Remember the last prayer of my dear daughter for you, 'Save them either by life or by death.'"

While the prospect of acquiring wealth loomed up in an attractive light before Mr. and Mrs. Bourdeau, as well as before their aspiring neighbors, they prized the education of their children above earthly riches, and made all their plans bend to the attainment of this noble object. Surely their vows, earnest and importunate prayers, fastings, self-denial and sacrifices, with this end in view, and with the conviction that one can be more useful with a sanctified education than without it, are remembered, and these parents, now sweetly sleeping in Jesus, will soon see the fulfilment of their hopes, and reap their full reward.

January 30, 1875, - about twenty-four years ago, - the companion of the deceased died from accident, at Bordoville, Vt., being outlived by his father, who reached the venerable age of nearly ninety-nine years. Father Bourdeau died, possessing the hope of a glorious life in the soon-coming immortal kingdom. Nine years after his death, Mother Bourdeau married Brother Joseph Giguere, who had also renounced the errors of Romanism, having for several years lived with Catholic priests, and being a special friend to the Bourdeau family. By this change of relations with Mother Bourdeau, her sons were left free to go as missionaries where duty would call them. Father Giguere is present among the mourners. He has shared in the conflicts, victories, and joys of the deceased and of her sons, and does not weep as one who has no hope.

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Mother Bourdeau was a woman of marked decision of character, was true as steel to principle, had a courage that never failed her, and strong faith in God, and she ever rejoiced in the prosperity of the cause of present truth. She had

very precious experiences in her Christian life. When past seventy-five years of age, she made a journey by rail to visit one of her relatives, and was let off by the conductor on an isolated platform, and at some distance from the point to which she was journeying. It was in the night, and the darkness was intense. She had to cross a railroad bridge on the track, and no one was present to lead her. At once, what appeared to her like a tall young man, drew near to her, and told her: "I know where you are going. Give me your arm, and I will lead you." She did so, and the welcome attendant led her safely across the bridge, and half a mile beyond it, even opposite the house at which she was to stop, and vanished away, leaving on Mother Bourdeau 's mind the indelible impression that a heavenly visitant had come to her assistance. ["This is indeed a remarkable instance of the visible ministration of good angels." The speaker.]

The disease by which she has fallen was *la grippe* followed by pneumonia. Soon after she was taken sick, it appeared to all that she might pass away very soon. At her special request Elder E. J. Waggoner and Father Prescott were invited to pray with her. She was prayed for, and was so relieved that she lived on to do the work she had it at heart to perform. Not long before her death the Spirit of God rested upon her, and she broke out with such expressions as the following: "I see God, and Jesus at his right hand." "I rest on Jesus' breast, and know that his eye is upon me and that he loves me." "I have had such a view of Jesus! How lovely,

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beautiful, majestic! He looked just as I once saw him in a dream. I have wondered why it was that I was permitted to suffer so long. I now see that it was that I might be permitted to recount God's blessings, and talk about them. I should have done this more." "I have been thinking about the loved ones who rest in hope, whom I will soon meet as the righteous dead are raised. [Here she mentioned several of the blessed dead, among them our pioneers, and added:] "Blessed meeting! Praise the Lord!" She continued:-

"Forty-two years ago dear Elder C. W. Sperry, who now rests in hope, asked me if I had my white robe for the kingdom [meaning the white raiment of a righteous character]. I could not then say that I had it according to the fulness of my desire; but now I can say I have it in that sense. My sins are all forgiven, and I am clothed with Christ's righteousness." She then pronounced blessings upon her children, based on past events in their lives and their respective callings and extending in the future, which, it is expected, will be a source of encouragement to those concerned, and lead them to shape their course according to the precious counsels given.

She also remembered absent loved ones, and showed a spirit of self-abnegation by saying of her first-born, Elder A. C. Bourdeau, who was supplying the place of his brother, in Montreal, P. Q., for a season, "I would not have him leave that field of labor, if by so doing the work there would suffer." Yet she had the privilege of also seeing this son and receiving his filial assistance in connection with that of his brother Daniel, before she fell asleep.

She left dying testimonies for unconverted persons, for whose salvation she had faithfully labored, still beseeching them to be encouraged by this scriptural invitation: "Come, now, and

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let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isa.1:18. And she added, "Meet me in the better world." But her great burden was for Canada, of which she said, "I have during my sickness obtained the clearest evidence that a great work is yet to be done for the French in Canada. Let not that field be neglected. Let the work there be thorough."

She then called for and enjoyed the singing of the hymn, "Will You Go?" (No. 1172 of our present collection). This she did in memory of what Father Bourdeau had done just before his death. He had urged his son, Daniel, then laboring for the French in Illinois, to come and see him before he died. Upon learning that he could not then respond, as souls were on the point of taking their stand for or against the truths of salvation, and it would have been disastrous to leave, he replied: "I cheerfully deprive myself of the privilege of seeing you for the sake of those who hear you. Tell them for me to receive your testimony, and meet me, with you, at the morning of the resurrection." Four months later, however, having revived, he was favorably disappointed in seeing his absent son before falling asleep, and in his last interview with him he asked him to sing the hymn in question. Hardly had his son sung one stanza when he interrupted him, asking that he stop singing.

Father Bourdeau was in a state of perfect consciousness. He was naturally skeptical, and required a good reason for every doctrine proposed to him before receiving it. He was slow to believe that God now speaks to his people through visions, yet he was too prudent to oppose the manifestations and productions of the Spirit of prophecy among us. But this time he himself

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shared in the same gift. While his son was singing, heaven was opened to his view. He saw a company of angels in beautiful attire, with instruments on which they played, after a leading angel had struck the first note. And they sang while they played.

As Father Bourdeau came out of his vision, he turned to his wife and said: "Tell Daniel to excuse me for stopping him. I have witnessed such a lovely sight! I have seen angels dressed in beautiful uniform. They were so lovely! A leading angel struck the first note on an instrument, and sang, and the others followed. And oh! what music! Daniel's singing compared with it was like the gratings of a cross-cut saw compared with the finest instrumental music that can be produced on earth."

When Mother Bourdeau had called up these interesting circumstances while the hymn, "Will You Go?" was being sung, she said, "Let thy handmaid now depart in peace; for I have seen thy salvation, and the good work started for my people in Canada. And do not neglect the publication and largely free distribution of literature prepared for Catholics. In my sickness God has shown me the importance of this work and he will not approve you if you neglect it."

At the commencement of the revival meetings held in Battle Creek in the fall of 1897, Mother Bourdeau had not been able to attend meetings at the Tabernacle for two years. She revived in answer to her earnest pleadings with God, and was able to attend all the meetings, taking part in some of them, and greatly rejoicing in the good work going on. She took a similar interest in the great revival of last fall.

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Father Bourdeau had a high sense of justice and honesty which were so prominent in his character that matters of differences between his neighbors were generally referred to him for settlement, with the proverbial remark, "We will leave it with honest Gust," an abbreviation of Augustin.

Father and Mother Bourdeau were noted for their hospitality. They were tender toward orphans, some of whom remained with them for years, and were treated as though they had been their own children. Never did the poor, the stranger, the widow, and the fatherless appeal to their noble hearts for help in vain.

According to his oft-repeated request to his God during the last six months of his life, Father Bourdeau fell asleep on the Sabbath that he so dearly loved. His prayer was that he might, as Jesus had done, rest on that day. And equally strong was the attachment of Mother Bourdeau for God's holy day. The last Sabbath of her life she was heard saying, "Blessed Sabbath! Precious Jesus! He is lulling me to sleep and easing my sufferings on his holy day." She was conscious till the last; and shortly before she died she said: "Lord, receive the remainder of my life. Jesus takes care of me. I will praise him with my last breath. Praise the Lord."

ADDRESS OF THE OFFICIATING MINISTER

Elder Uriah Smith, having read the above sketch, delivered the following appropriate address:-

THERE is one text which will naturally come to the mind of every one who has listened to the foregoing sketch of our deceased sister, and that is, the text which constitutes the comfort and embellishment of the third angel's message of Rev.14:9-12: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit; that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

The word, "Blessed," is defined to mean, "favored with blessings; highly favored; esteemed or accounted happy." This is not a benediction which, from any human standpoint, would be pronounced upon the dead. But it is true; for the Lord has said it; and it was not left for John to write it, as he wrote the other portions of the book of Revelation; but it was designed to be made so prominent, and emphatic, that an independent voice, - even a voice from heaven - makes the announcement: but even that is not sufficient to impress it upon the attention of his people, as God designed it should be; hence the Spirit hastens to add its testimony by an emphatic affirmation: "Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

Tracing the use of the word, "Blessed," as employed in the Scriptures, we find it applied to the most important and exalted conditions and subjects; as, "*Blessed* is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly;" and to such a most gracious promise is made. Again, "*Blessed* is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. *Blessed* is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." Ps.32:1,2. "*Blessed* is the nation whose God is the Lord." Ps.33:12.

As used in the New Testament, when spoken of men it almost invariably has reference to the blessings and joys of the future state, and whatever pertains to that eternal condition of happiness and bliss, eclipses all that belongs to the things of time and sense, as far as heaven is higher than the earth. And this assurance concerning those who, in the special time brought to view in the message, fall asleep in Jesus, must have been made chiefly because of the destiny that awaits them in a future state, for there is nothing in death, in itself considered, to make one blessed. But there is no avenue to a future life but by the resurrection from the dead, for the apostle assures us that if there is no resurrection, then even those who have fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

This word, in this text, therefore, affirms in the most satisfying manner the glorious doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. But the blessing covers all the time between the moment when they fall asleep, and the time when they awake again in the resurrection, for the "henceforth" begins with the present, and takes in all that is to follow. Hence, all who fall asleep under this message are thus set apart for the unique blessing here announced.

The reason for this will appear when we take into consideration the nature of this time. It is the period when evil influences are to prevail in such unwonted power as to make the times pre-eminently perilous; "in the last days perilous times shall come"; the time when strange and abnormal conditions will prevail in the natural world; in the political, social, and moral branches of society; when diseases will break forth with epidemic power, and wickedness of all names and grades will run riot; a time which will try men's souls, and put every man's faith to the severest test; a time when the current will set so strong in the direction of all unrighteousness that it will be almost impossible to stem it, and none but the elect will be able to do it; but when to draw back is to draw back to perdition.

Is not, therefore, he blessed who, by falling asleep, can be exempted from all these dangers, and crucial tests, and yet be counted as if he had passed through them all, and been victorious? who can thus escape the dangers, and rest with a hope in Christ which there is no more possibility of losing, and a reward made everlastingly sure to him; for his "works do follow him," to be remembered and rewarded in the kingdom? How forcibly is our attention called by these words to the importance of *living* daily in the Lord; for if death overtakes us, and we are not in him, we can not *die* in him; and must then be debarred from the blessing of the text.

We have here also, an assurance that nothing can separate us from God. The words are a confirmation of what Paul says in Romans 8:38: "For I am persuaded

that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in

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Christ Jesus our Lord." Christ is the Lord of life, not death. Hence those who are in him, do not lose their title to life, even in death. And in view of this fact, the apostle exclaims that he (God) "is not ashamed to be called their God; for he has prepared them a city." They are therefore to have a future life to possess and dwell joyfully in that city. He represents that God would be ashamed to be called their God, if they are to be allowed to remain forever dead.

Our Saviour himself had declared that God is not the God of the dead, but of the living; and this was spoken of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who were at that time in their graves: but in the promise and purpose of God they were "living," for God speaks of those things which are not, as though they were, because they are sure to be. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the family of God, of which they were a part, are therefore to live again, and live to all eternity.

It is not the teaching of revelation that there should be an attempt to counteract the sorrows of bereavement by mere human stoicism; but the sorrow is to be mollified by the hope of the gospel. The Apostle Paul declares to the Thessalonians that he would not have them ignorant concerning them which are asleep, that they might not sorrow as others who have no hope. Underneath the sorrow there is a foundation, not of sand or miry clay, but of the sure adamant of the blessed hope; and there is nothing that shows more clearly the divine origin of the volume of revelation, than its complete and perfect adaptability to all our conditions and our necessities, in that it meets the solemn and profound inquiries of the human heart. No theodicy ever devised in the pagan world has ever made any such provision.

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When our loved ones leave us, in the intensity of our hearts' desires, we want to know what their condition is; is death the final goal? will they live again? shall we see them and live with them in conscious companionship once more? No science of men, no philosophy of the schools make any adequate or certain reply to these momentous questions. But the Bible with explicit assurance answers, "Thy dead men shall live." "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust." "O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves." "It [the body] shall be raised in glory." "The dead [in Christ] shall be raised incorruptible." The Lord shall "fashion anew this body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory." "Neither can they die any more." "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." "I [Christ] will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."

So much for the general promises of God on this great question. Is it then to be wondered at that the Scriptures do not spread over the grave the pall of mourning, nor blot the cheering record with hopeless tears?

But more than all this, in the words of our text, and for such an occasion as this, it crowns the lesson, with a soul-inspiring benediction: "Blessed are the dead

which die in the Lord from henceforth." What better hope could be set before us? What more comforting prospect could we have opened to our view, concerning those who are taken away from our companionship in this life?

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This mother in Israel, so far as human discernment, enlightened by the declarations of God's word, can penetrate, had happily complied with all the conditions on which these glorious promises are suspended, and the blessing pronounced upon the dead in the Lord, at this time, when to live has become so perilous, is hers.

Another part of the promise, which here applies with peculiar force, is contained in these words: "And their works do follow them." It would be esteemed a blessed thing to live an unbroken life to the end, filling up the time with faithful service, and then hear the sentence awarded, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord." Equally blessed are the pious dead, who go down to the grave in a living connection with the Lord at the time noted in the text. All the period from their death to their resurrection is counted as filled up with just such faithful service as they performed while living, taken on the merits of Him in whom their life is then hid. Easily you will recall the faithful course of life pursued, and the intensely devoted service rendered as set forth in the sketch that has been read. Think, then, what will be the blessed record of ministry standing to her account in the resurrection. And here the words of the apostle to the Hebrews will be fulfilled: "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work, and labor of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints and do minister." Many years of service for the Lord; a life well filled with obedience to duty, and the calls of the gospel; the record well concluded, with no chance for any change, and no danger of any failure; - what better legacy can a Christian leave to his sorrowing friends and brethren in the Lord? What stronger elements of comfort can be given

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to the bereaved? What sweeter consolation can be poured into mourning hearts? There is nothing more satisfying than this, except that promise, unfailingly certain, of the happy meeting of these dear and parted friends in a day now not far away. We have not only the privilege, but the happy command of an inspired apostle, to "comfort one another with such a hope as this."

The hymns sung at the Tabernacle were Nos. 715, 568, and 748 of *The Seventh-Day Adventist Hymn and Tune Book*. At the house, the residence of Elder A. C. Bourdeau, where the deceased died, was sung, "The Last Lovely Morning," No. 853 of the same collection. As this was a favorite of the deceased, and was the last hymn that was sung to her at her request, it is here inserted in full:

1. The last lovely morning,
All blooming and fair.
Is fast onward fleeting,
And soon will appear.

CHORUS.-

While the mighty, mighty, mighty trump
Sounds, "Come, come away!"
Oh, let us be ready
To hail the glad day.

2. And when that bright morning
In splendor shall dawn,
Our tears will be ended,
Our sorrows all gone.

3. The Bridegroom from glory,
To earth shall descend;
Ten thousand bright angels
Around him attend.

4. The graves will be opened,
The saints will arise,
And with the Redeemer
Mount up to the skies.

5. The saints, then immortal,
In glory shall reign;
The Bride with the Bridegroom
Forever remain.

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When the turn of the relatives came to take a last view of the corpse in the Tabernacle, one of them broke forth in these terms: "Mother dear, tender, loving, faithful, true, heroic, abounding in deeds of love and righteousness, good bye till the voice of thy Father shall shake heaven and earth, and call thee forth with those who have fallen asleep in Jesus in the message. Sleep on sweetly till then, dear mother. Adieu."

Another said: "Farewell, dear mother! By the assisting grace of God, I will meet you in the kingdom at the morning of the resurrection."

The remains of the deceased were deposited in the Battle Creek Oak Hill Cemetery, there to be soon resuscitated after the likeness of Christ's most glorious body.

