

[Rochester, Monroe Co.]

### Sabbath School Excursion and Pic-Nic

The Sabbath School connected with the Universalist Society in Rochester, N. Y. had an Excursion and Pic-Nic near Avon Springs on Thursday the 13<sup>th</sup> inst. The Excursion was got up in a hurry; no notice having been given until the Sunday previous, but it came out a very creditable affair after all. The morning of Thursday was very cloudy and gave the appearance of rain; so much so that many who early assembled at the church were inclined to postpone the Excursion until the following Tuesday. The majority, however, decided it would not rain, and so we prepared to start. The children came pouring in with smiling faces, followed by teachers, parents and friends[;] and with Brs. [Revs.] Montgomery and Ottoway at the head for leaders, the procession moved off to the Genesee Valley Railroad Depot. There we found Mr. Pengra, Railroad Agent, who received us in a very gentlemanly manner, and did his best to have us all comfortably seated in the cars. We could not all be seated, however, for the crowd was too great and the cars too limited; but no one objected to that. It was impossible for anyone to be cross, even if compelled to stand up and be jostled a little; for the smiles that flooded that mass of children would have taken a frown from the face as suddenly as the spring sun melts away the frost. At a quarter before 11 o'clock, when the cars started, the heavens had brightened up, the sun was shining, and all hearts were cheered at the prospect of a pleasant time. After carrying us slowly about twenty miles through one of the finest portions of the State, or of the world, we arrived at the Grove, which is situated about a mile and a half from Avon Springs.

The school was immediately gathered into a circle, with the crowd outside, when Br. W. J. R. Ottoway, the Assistant Superintendent, read the Service written for such occasions, from Br. Bacon's S. S. Manual; a hymn was then sung, which was followed by a few remarks from the writer.—The School and friends were requested to dispose of the great abundance brought in their baskets, at such a time and in such a manner as they thought proper, and then, after a while, to assemble again to sing a few hymns and listen to speeches; but they did not come together again that day until they assembled in the cars at the depot. After dinner, if we may call it such, the multitude seated themselves over the woods as suddenly and with as much delight, as persons just set free from prison. O what a treat, after being shut up in the city all summer, to sniff that pure country air, and to unbend our care-worn spirits in innocent recreation. How it gladdened our hearts to see these scholars gambol and frolic, and to hear their merry voices ring through the grove!

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The sylvan scene went on joyously for an hour or two, when lo! the multitude were missing!—Where had they gone? Some had gone to a military encampment a short distance off—some to the Springs to get a drink of the sulphur water—others had gone to the village, and others still had followed on to see where the rest had gone.—Well, said we who were left behind, there is no more prospect of any more exercises in the grove today; our Pic-Nic has ended in a general stampede over the county. We felt a little uneasy for fear some of the children might get lost, or injured, or do some mischief; but how could we help it. We had no means of calling them together, and as for catching them, it would have taken a hundred Indians on their horses, and each with a lasso.

The hour for returning home finally came. The few of us who remained on the ground marched down to the depot, where we found all the rest of our company seated in the cars, and appearing as happy as larks. Although in consequence of the early dispersion there had been less opportunity for forming acquaintances, and for social communion, yet they seemed generally to have had a very pleasant time, and to have secured what they left the city for—plenty of fresh air and fine exercise in the woods and fields. We reached the city about 6 o'clock—grateful that no accident had occurred to mar the pleasure of the day, and feeling that the excursion had done us good.... May God bless the Sabbath School cause and help us all to be its faithful supporters.

J. H. T. [Rev. James Harvey Tuttle, pastor]

*Christian Ambassador*, Auburn NY, Sat. 29 Sep 1855

Transcribed on 9 Jan 2007 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY