

Vs. 22.—The hair of his head began to grow. With the loss of his hair went his special endowment of strength; and it is here intimated that with the growth of his hair that strength returned. Not that his strength lay in his hair, except as a symbol of his Nazariteship (Num. vi. 5), or consecration to the Lord. It is implied that Samson was brought to deep and hearty repentance, so that the renewed growth of hair became a true sign of a renewed consecration, through which there came back to him the miraculous strength. His physical blindness was blessed to his spiritual sight.

Vs. 23, 24.—The religious festival here spoken of must have been held a long enough time after Samson's seizure to allow his hair to grow. Upon such a festival it was the practice of the heathen nations to bring forth their war prisoners, and, in heaping on them every species of indignity, offer their grateful tribute to the gods who, as they supposed, had aided them in gaining the victory. Dagen. The fish-god, their chief deity; usually represented as having the head and hands of a man, with the lower portion of the body like a fish,—resembling the fabled merman.

Vs. 25.—Call for Samson. A rare occasion was this, when such a notable enemy as Samson was in their power; one whom they called "the destroyer of our country." Make us sport. In the sense of becoming a butt for their jests and scoffs; and also, perhaps, in being compelled to dance for their amusement. But now their insults glanced from him to God, in whom he trusted, and whom they defied. In mocking Samson, they mocked the Lord whom they contrasted with their god, and reviled as one unable to deliver.

Vs. 26, 27.—Being blind, a lad was employed to lead Samson about by the hand. A mighty purpose of vengeance now fills Samson's mind; and to accomplish it he tells the lad to lead him to the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lead upon them. It is not necessary to have a thorough understanding of the architecture of this building, to believe that it was so constructed that its principal support was these two large pillars, placed close together, which, being broken, involved the whole in ruins. Dr. Jamieson says: "This building seems to have been similar to the spacious and open amphitheatres well known among the Romans, and still found in many countries of the East. They are built wholly of wood. The standing-place for the spectators is a wooden floor resting upon two pillars, and raised on an inclined plane, so as to enable all to have a view of the area in the centre. In the middle there are two large beams on which the whole weight of the structure lies; and these beams are supported by two pillars placed close to each other." The lords and principal persons seem to have sat within, under the roof, while the people, to the number of three thousand, stood on the flat roof.

Vs. 28-30.—Samson bound, like Jonah in darkness, had learned to pray. His prayer does not show the highest spiritual reach; but he did not have the instruction and light of this gospel age. It was accepted and answered. His marvelous strength had originally been given him to deliver Israel by destroying their enemies. He had lost it in sin. Now he would recover it for the original purpose, and use it against the enemies of God and of Israel. That the personal element of revenge for the loss of his eyes enters so largely into his action, is natural to one who had lived upon such a low spiritual plane. His prayer and deed were such evidence of faith in God as entitled him to a mention among the children of faith in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. Let me die with the Philistines. Here was not the reckless act of a suicide, but of a patriot who freely sacrifices his own life for his country. He bowed himself with might; i. e., the miraculous might of a former time. The dead . . . were more, etc. This was his greatest victory, and a double victory; a victory over self, as well as his enemies. The Philistines received a crushing blow, while Israel was encouraged to trust in the Lord.

V. 21.—The men of Samson's tribe, his brethren, the Danites, taking advantage of the consternation of the Philistines over their loss, went down to Gaza and recovered the body of their champion; and gave him honorable interment in the burying-place of Manoah his father. The strongest man that ever lived was a testotaller. Had Samson's wisdom corresponded with his strength, he would have fully delivered Israel. Many young men lose their manhood and their souls in following the course of Samson! We see in Samson's case that when men sell themselves to evil, reparation is costly. Let us not tempt God by venturing into sin.

Help for Parents, or for the Teacher of the Primary Class.

—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

The place where Samson was born was close to the country of the Philistines, his strength was a special endowment from God, conditioned on his remaining a Nazarite (Judges xiii. 25). Explain the meaning of Nazarite, and what was required of those who assumed its vows. He reaped what he sowed. He might have been good and great, as well as strong. He yielded to sinful pleasure, and paid the penalty in being shorn of his strength.

Show here how always "the wages of sin is death." Samson knew about God, and suffered because he turned away from God and loved wickedness. Doubtless there were many good qualities and deeds in the twenty years during which he judged Israel. During his blindness and imprisonment, he doubtless saw himself as never before, and in penitence sought the Lord.

Souths' Department.

Original and Selected. Bible Enigma.

No. 238.

Here is a pile of stones—all precious; together they form part of the New Jerusalem. Give with each one the text referred to:

- 1. A precious stone mentioned in Revelation as being part of a breast plate.
2. A stone mentioned by one of the prophets as being used for windows.
3. The stone mentioned by Ezekiel as appearing in the likeness of a throne.
4. The jewel with which St. Paul says women are not to adorn themselves.
5. The stone to which the rainbow round the throne is compared.
6. The stone whose value is not so precious as that of wisdom.

No. 239.

Here are 11 names to be found. The last syllable of the first word makes the first syllable of the next, and so on to the end:

- 1. Lois' grandson.
2. One of the Macedonian colonies.
3. A Philistine giant.
4. One of Solomon's servants.
5. A city of Benjamin.
6. A daughter of Zelophehad.
7. A town in the district of Judah.
8. An ancient Amorite.
9. A city built by Ashur.
10. A Benjaminite, father of Judah.
11. A daughter of Sheshan.

CURIOUS QUESTIONS. No. 104.

Here are several passages of Scripture. Take one word from each and form a proverb showing the Christian's security:

- 1. "The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity." (Prov. xviii. 14).
2. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches." (Prov. xxii. 1).
3. "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord." (Prov. xx. 27).
4. "By humility and fear of the Lord, are riches, honour, and life." (Prov. xxii. 4).
5. "Safety is of the Lord." (Prov. xxi. 31).
6. "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes." (Prov. xxi. 2).
7. "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city." (Prov. xviii. 19).
8. "He is the tower of salvation for his king." (2 Sam. xxii. 51).

No. 105.

Form a triangle of words of 1. An overcoat. 2. A man who takes large interest. 3. One who governs. 4. A large vegetable growth. 5. A contraction of over. 6. An ancient country. 7. The last of it.

No. 106.

Here is a confusion of letters. Put them in order and they will form a Proverb which is a sad fact:

"Huhg huto hudsolet ryba a lofo ni o trmra mangao hawet ihwt a etepsl eyt lwl ont ihs olsofihsens catdr rfmfo ihm."

Find answers to the above—write them down—and see how they agree with the answers to be given next week.

Answer to Bible Enigmas.

No. 236.

- 1. H al f.....Luke xix. 8.
2. O lly e.....Genesis vii. 11.
3. P ersi a.....Ezra i. 1.
4. E a r.....Matthew xxvi. 51.

HOPE AND FEAR. No. 237.

- 1. G alile e.....1 Kings ix. 11.
2. E ba l.....Deut. xi. 29.
3. H usha l.....2 Sam. xv. 32.
4. A pollo s.....1 Cor. iii. 6.
5. Z arephat h.....1 Kings xvii. 9-24.
6. I dumeh a.....Mark iii. 8.

GEHAZI—ELISHA.

ANSWERS TO CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

- No. 100. The letter "G."
No. 101. Madam.
No. 102. 1. Sight, site; 2. Tied, tide; 3. Hart, heart.
103. Make haste slowly.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Letter from Pastor D. G. Macdonald.

Dear Editor,—

Having had some friction in regard to our work in Sackville, at the Eastern N. B. Association, having, by that body, been shut off from the privilege of defence or explanation; having been refused space for the accompanying letter in the Visitor; and feeling that an explanation for my refusal to take the hand of fellowship from the Association is due to the denomination and to myself I ask of you space for the statements I now desire to make, believing that your interest in my work accompanied with your sense of justice will accord me the privilege I seek.

As I had the pleasure of communicating to your issue of the 4th ult., an account of our work and its results I need only add that in all departments the interest is deepening and widening. As the condition of the Bible School in connection with any Christian church may be taken as a good index of the condition, I may add to the statement formerly made that the Bible School in the centre of our field has grown from about 30 to 130—the increase being as follows since the union of the Churches in January last. February average attendance 22; March 39; April 68; May 75; June 85; July 100. We have two other Schools having a membership of about 160. Our numerical increase, as a church has been stated before. Our spiritual pulse can only be felt by coming amongst us, whilst our financial health may be seen by the following statement. We have changed our subscription papers into the first day of the week-offerings of the people for the support of the pastor and current expenses of the church. We have expended on local work during the year \$2,588. We have put into the denominational treasury, apart from local work, \$310, about one-half of the aggregate amount of the other 41 churches in the Association. Where, as, last year the expenditure at home was little or nothing, and the total given to our denominational work by the whole of Sackville, was \$6. Having been enabled by the divine favor, to do this amount of work for God and the denomination, we think we ought to be allowed the privilege to explain our reason for not acquiescing, by receiving the hand of fellowship in the manner in which the Eastern N. B. Association investigated our work, and acted in regard to it, which privilege, dear bro. I doubt not, your sense of common courtesy and justice, will now accord to me.

When the letter from the Baptist church of Sackville came before the Association, the matter was submitted to a committee of three, afterwards increased to five, two at least of the five known to be partisans and already committed to a certain line of policy. This committee ruled that we acted irregularly in the formation of the new church—that majorities had no right to govern and at the dictation of the leading spirit in the committee the Association shut off all discussion on the report. The Association, however, unanimously received the new church into her fellowship, and asked me as one of her representatives, to accept the hand of fellowship. For me to do so would be to give my assent (1) to the committee as the best men that could be found to investigate the matter, (2) to the ruling of that committee, (3) to the action of that committee while in session—calling in four men from one side and only one from the other, and (4) to the subsequent action of the Association in shutting off all discussion on the report of the committee. To neither of these could I assent. I wanted to make the following explanation:—We have undertaken our work in Sackville in the fear of God. In every step towards its accomplishment we have acted regularly, constitutionally, and scripturally. To sustain us in our action we have not only the prayer of Christ for His disciples, (see John xvii.) and the plain teaching of all God's word, but also the world's best authorities on Baptist Church polity, living or dead. (Here I was stopped in my explanation, but your readers will want to hear me through and I will proceed.) For me to accept the hand of fellowship on the basis of that report would be to sacrifice the independence of individual churches and admit that majorities have no right to act in opposition to the will of minorities; or in other words that any one man, or woman either, can veto the action of a whole community, however, fatal to the cause of God the non-performance of that act may be:—example. In any community there are two churches. Their union into one is essential to the prosperity of the cause

of God. One church unanimously decides to form the union; the other, all but one man or woman, wants the union consummated. The membership of the church is 100 or 1,000, if you will, and the property owned is \$1,000 or \$100,000. If the 99 or 999 members want to join their brethren they may do so, but this one man or woman will be the church, holding the property, and as he is not likely to have a minority to oppose his action, he can do as he pleases with that property—scatter it to the four winds of heaven spending it upon his lusts—for majorities have no right to govern; he is the minority and he will not be controlled. The above picture is not overdrawn; for if majorities are not allowed to govern where is the limit? Is there a law on record, sacred or secular, requiring a nine-tenth vote or a three-quarter vote, or even a two-third vote. 'Tis the glory of English law that minorities must submit to the well expressed wishes of majorities, unless otherwise stated in the constitution that governs them. Baptist Churches are not lawless organizations.

To receive the hand of fellowship at the sacrifice of such principles as are involved is something I am not yet prepared to do, much as I would like to be in fellowship with my brethren.

The two principles we are asked to sacrifice are, (1) the power of each church to govern itself, and (2) the right of government by the majority of members present at meetings regularly called. The sacrifice is too great brethren, you will have to excuse us from making it. In our action we not only have the approval of God, as indicated by continued prosperity, but we have the approval of the world's best authorities on Baptist Church Polity. "Baptists have ever believed in the entire and absolute independence of the churches; that every church is perfectly capable of self-government, and that, therefore, no one acknowledges any higher authority, under Christ, than itself; that with the church all ecclesiastical action, commences and with it, it terminates." "Wayland's Principles and Practices of the Baptists," p. 178. On page 181 the same author, than whom no better can be quoted, shows the absurdity of the action of the Association and the right of majorities to govern in each church, in the following paragraph. "It is as truly a violation of the independence of the churches, and the right of private judgment, when several hundred brethren meet in some public Convention, and manufacture public opinion, and adopt courses which their brethren are called upon to follow, on pain of the displeasure of the majority, as when they establish a formal representation to whose decision all the consistency must submit."

I have also before me now Dr. Scozz's "Baptist Church Directory," well known to all our Baptist ministry, I hope, and should be known to our members generally. Of this excellent and standard work Dr. Church, of New York, says: "I have carefully examined the manuscript of the work entitled 'Baptist Church Directory,' and find it a clear and concise analysis of the constitution, faith, and usages of Baptist Churches. The work seems to be adapted to do much good by giving correct views of discipline, rules of order of religious bodies, and the duties in general of church members. I would, therefore, recommend its publication." Similarly recommended is this work by Drs. Eaton, Crawford, Fuller, Caldicott, Williams, Jeter, Lathrop, Kendrick, Gillet, Brantley, Dowling, Pratt, Milliken, and Weston, all of whom carefully examined the work in manuscript, and recommended its publication for the instruction of the churches; hence the testimony of "The Baptist Church Directory" is the united testimony of all the above authorities.

On pages 57 and 58 the "Directory" gives the following on the point now under consideration: "It is therefore evident that all ecclesiastical authority resides in the church; that is, in each individual church. The acts of all other men and bodies of men whatever are advisory, not authoritative, inasmuch as the church cannot transfer its authority to them; and Christ has given them no other similar authority."

"Note 4.—Since the government devolves on the church collectively, constituting a democracy, and because all the individuals composing the body cannot be expected, in all cases, perfectly to harmonize, therefore, it is allowed that the majority shall rule."

Note 5.—But majorities may err, and do wrong, and their acts transcend the divine statutes, and become unjust and oppressive to minorities thus forming an unlawful administration of the government; therefore the acts of majorities are only to be recognized, approved and sanctioned when they are evidently in accordance with the laws of Christ as recorded in the New Testament."

"Note 6.—In disputes and differences of opinions large minorities are, perhaps, as likely to be right as small majorities, therefore majorities should act cautiously and not invade their rights. But if minorities think themselves injured there is no source of redress, no higher tribunal of appeal. They may retire and find a home in some other church. Or they may organize themselves into a new one, or they may call a council, and receive advice and expressions of opinion. But a council can neither correct the wrong nor punish the wrong-doers, any further than the force of their advice and opinions may affect them, or the public sentiment."

In my last I submitted this matter to J. M. Pendleton D. D., author of "Pendleton's Church Manual" and many other standard works. Dr. Pendleton is now in his 72nd year. Dr. Wayland speaks of him as "an honored standard bearer" and hopes that he will continue "to give his brethren in the Ministerial Conference the benefits of his matured wisdom."

I also submitted the matter to Dr. Hovey, President of the Newton Theological Seminary—authority of no mean reputation, of whom the same Dr. Wayland speaks in relation to his work, as a member of the Executive Committee of the Missionary Union, of which he was a member for fifteen years, and for the greater part of this time the chairman of the committee in the following words. "Probably there is no one now living whose knowledge is more broad, whose judgment is more reliable, or whose heart is more enlisted in the cause."

(Above in "Note 3" he states that "every church is to be the judge and interpreter of those teachings of itself.")

Note 6.—In disputes and differences of opinions large minorities are, perhaps, as likely to be right as small majorities, therefore majorities should act cautiously and not invade their rights. But if minorities think themselves injured there is no source of redress, no higher tribunal of appeal. They may retire and find a home in some other church. Or they may organize themselves into a new one, or they may call a council, and receive advice and expressions of opinion. But a council can neither correct the wrong nor punish the wrong-doers, any further than the force of their advice and opinions may affect them, or the public sentiment."

In my last I submitted this matter to J. M. Pendleton D. D., author of "Pendleton's Church Manual" and many other standard works. Dr. Pendleton is now in his 72nd year. Dr. Wayland speaks of him as "an honored standard bearer" and hopes that he will continue "to give his brethren in the Ministerial Conference the benefits of his matured wisdom."

I also submitted the matter to Dr. Hovey, President of the Newton Theological Seminary—authority of no mean reputation, of whom the same Dr. Wayland speaks in relation to his work, as a member of the Executive Committee of the Missionary Union, of which he was a member for fifteen years, and for the greater part of this time the chairman of the committee in the following words. "Probably there is no one now living whose knowledge is more broad, whose judgment is more reliable, or whose heart is more enlisted in the cause."

COPY OF LETTER TO DR. PENDLETON.

"In a certain community two churches existed under the names of '1st' and '2nd.' The 1st unanimously agreed to give up their name '1st,' and in connection and with the concurrence of their brethren of the '2nd' be known as the Baptist Church of —; and a majority of the '2nd' passed a similar resolution in regard to their name. They organized the new church and God richly blesses the work so that their membership has nearly doubled in four months, kindly tell me:—1st Is there anything in Baptist Church Polity that makes the new organization unconstitutional? 2nd Has not the name '2nd' as well as the name '1st,' been lost in the new organization? 3rd. If majorities are not allowed to act in matters of this kind where is the limit?"

DR. PENDLETON'S REPLY. UPLAND, PA. MAY 12, 1883.

REV. D. G. MACDONALD,

Dear Brother,—Your questions are easily answered. I answer the first in the negative, there is nothing in Baptist polity which makes the new organization unconstitutional. The second I answer in the affirmative; both names (the 1st and 2nd) have been lost in the new organization. In answer to the third question, I, of course have to say that in the matter referred to the majority had a perfect right to decide. Surely a minority should not govern in such matters, this would be at war with scripture and common sense.

Very truly, J. M. PENDLETON. COPY OF LETTER TO DR. HOVEY. "In this community two churches existed under the name of 1st and 2nd. A desire has been for many years often and ardently expressed by the denomination generally, and the pious in those particular churches that they should be one. On the 27th December last I met the 1st church at a full meeting, submitted that they give up their name '1st' and in connection and with the concurrence of their brethren of the second church unite all their church interests together and be henceforth known as the Baptist Church of Sackville; resolution was carried unanimously; The next day I met the 2nd church at a full meeting, submitted a similar resolution, met some opposition, resolution was carried but with a stiff minority.—On the 3rd of January, we regularly organized the "Baptist Church of Sackville" composed of 130 members—55 from the former 1st church; and 75 from the former 2nd church—9 of these 75 having voted in the minority at the above mentioned meeting. Kindly tell me:—

1st. Whether or not my action is in harmony with Baptist Church Polity? 2nd. Have not the 1st and 2nd churches, by the passing of the above mentioned resolution, and the subsequent organization of the new church, ceased to exist only as they exist in the new organization? 3rd. If not, if majorities cannot act, where is the limit?"

DR. HOVEY'S REPLY. NEWTON CENTRE, MAY 10, 1883.

My Dear Brother,—

I do not see anything in your action, or that of the two Baptist Churches in Sackville, which is not in accord with Baptist principles. This is my answer to your first question. Of course I cannot say that you have been perfect in your manner of stating or arguing the case, I only mean that the churches could properly take such action as you represent them to have taken.

I think that the 1st and 2nd churches ceased to exist as distinct churches when they passed the vote you describe and the members (or a majority of them) united together in the "Baptist Church of Sackville." The Church is bound by

a majority of the members present at a meeting regularly called. A minority cannot claim to be the church; it must yield to the will of the majority as I understand the case.

You will of course bear in mind that I cannot form any opinion as to the wisdom of the union thus accomplished. But it is certainly better as a rule, to have one strong church in a place than two weak ones.

I trust the blessing of God will still rest upon you. Be always hopeful and enterprising, as I think you are inclined to be. We are all in good health. Very truly yours,

ALVAH HOVEY.

In a letter of a later date Dr. Hovey also states that "it would be preposterous for a minority to undertake to discipline the majority for voting to dissolve the church, when the majority supposed that such a step was proper."

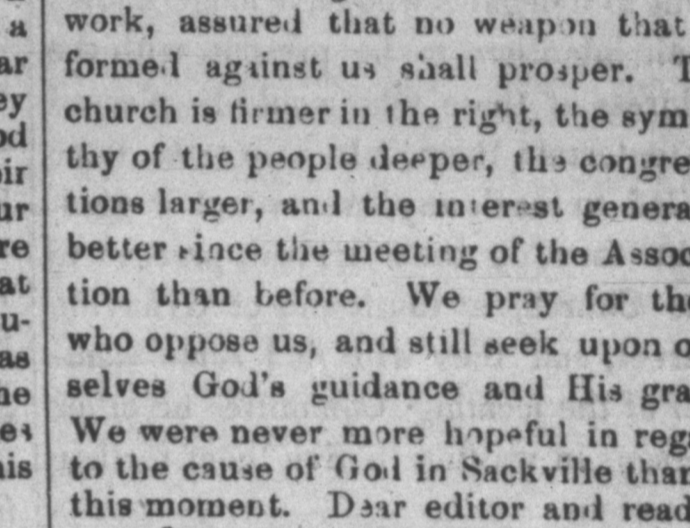
I might go on giving authorities, but I submit that these above quoted are as good as hundreds, and better than thousands of such men as controlled the Eastern N. B. Association in this matter. I further submit that the minority party in Sackville, (whose strength may be seen from the fact that at a meeting for discipline last week only seven were present), are no more a regularly organized Baptist church than Mr. Blake and his adherents are the government of this Dominion, (asking Mr. Blake's pardon for the comparison). Not only do the authorities quoted above, which are ample and undoubted, sustain our position, but the act of incorporation by which we are legally governed requires it. "Whenever by this act any Board of Trustees or number of persons may require to do any act a majority of those present at the meeting shall be sufficient for the purpose,"—section 7. Having acted, as above stated, in the fear of God, and with unmistakable evidences of His approval, and, in every step, regularly, constitutionally, and in harmony with the principles of Christianity and the prayer of Christ, we can safely leave His own cause in His own hands and go forward, as heretofore, in His work, assured that no weapon that is formed against us shall prosper. The church is firmer in the right, the sympathy of the people deeper, the congregations larger, and the interest generally better since the meeting of the Association than before. We pray for those who oppose us, and still seek upon ourselves God's guidance and His grace: We were never more hopeful in regard to the cause of God in Sackville than at this moment. Dear editor and readers pray for us.

Yours in labor and in love, D. G. MACDONALD. Sackville, N. B., July 25, 1883.

P. S.—The relation of "the Baptist Church of Sackville" to the Association is not at all affected by my refusing to receive the hand of fellowship. The church has been received into the body by a unanimous vote, and her letter read. She is now a member of the body. She may or may not recognize the privilege thus accorded to her,—just as she feels disposed. She continues a member of the body all the same, however, for three years, even though she may not recognize the relationship, unless, indeed, the body, at one of its public gatherings, and by a majority vote, ask that the fellowship of the Association, accorded by the vote of 1883, be withdrawn.

D. G. M.

WOMAN CAN HEALTH OF WOMAN SYMPATHIZE WITH IS THE HOPE OF WOMAN IS THE RACE



Great for Health Lydia E. Pinkham's

LYDIA E. PINKHAM'S VEGETABLE COMPOUND.

A Sure Cure for all FEMALE WEAKNESSES, including Leucorrhoea, Irregular and Painful Menstruation, Inflammation and Ulceration of the Womb, Flooding, PRO-LAPSUS UTERI, &c. Efficient to the taste, efficacious and immediate in its effect. It is a great help in pregnancy, and relieves pain during labor and at regular periods. PHYSICIANS USE IT AND PRESCRIBE IT FREELY.

FOR ALL WEAKNESSES of the generative organs of either sex, it is second to no remedy that has ever been before the public; and for all diseases of the KIDNEYS it is the Greatest Remedy in the World.

KIDNEY COMPLAINTS of Either Sex Find Great Relief in Its Use.

LYDIA E. PINKHAM'S BLOOD PURIFIER will eradicate every vestige of Humors from the Blood, at the same time will give tone and strength to the system. As a purgative it results as the Compound.

Both the Compound and Blood Purifier are prepared at 233 and 235 Western Avenue, Lynn, Mass. Price of either, \$1. Six bottles for \$5. The Compound is sent by mail in the form of pills, or of lozenges, on receipt of price; \$1 per box for either. Mrs. Pinkham freely answers all letters of inquiry. Enclose 1 cent stamp. Send for pamphlet. Mention this Paper.

LYDIA E. PINKHAM'S LIVER PILLS cure Constipation, Biliousness and Torpidity of the Liver. 25 cents. Sold by all Druggists. Oct. 4. 1 y.